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LABOR

BENEFITS OF SHCHEKINO EXPERIMENT QUESTIONED

Moscow OKTYABR' in Russian No 4, Apr 82 pp 162-175

[Article by Aleksandr Radov: "The Shchekino Paradox: A Sociological Essay"]

[Text] It was not that long ago that Vera Ivanovna Slepykh roamed the editor's offices of different newspapers and journals in search of refuge--not for herself but for her brainchild, the famous Shchekino method. When she found an ear that she thought she could trust, she released a flood of pent-up troubles:

"I feel I'm to blame, because I believed in the promises and therefore led the collective astray."

What we have here is a real-life drama of the working man. Were we to translate it to the stage, it would keep the spectator at the edge of his seat until the closing remark. Incidently this remark has yet to be uttered in real life, since the outcome of the Shchekino experiment is still unclear.

But if this is a real life drama of the working man, is it really all that dramatic? This has yet to be proven out. For the moment at least, there are some knowns: For 15 years in succession the Shchekino method has persistently fought against mismangement and waste. There is much that is edifying and instructive for us in this duel: After all, the Shchekino method was doubtlessly the first swallow on the road to an economical economy. And if we are to travel this road faster and more successfully, we must learn the lessons of Shchekino.

A Remedy for Scarcity?

It's not far from Moscow to Shchekino: three hours to Tula, and then just another 20 minutes more. Tolstoy's Yasnaya Polyana is but 3 kilometers away. Thus it was no accident that I recalled Lev Nikolayevich's words: "It is said that one swallow does not make the spring; but if one swallow does not make the spring, does this really mean that a swallow that already feels it to be spring should not fly, but wait? If so, then every bud and grass blade would have to wait, and spring would never come."

It was not until later that I realized that this thought of Tolstoy's came to me as an unconscious response to something said by Boris Mikhaylovich Sukharevskiy, whose job it was to handle pay problems at the State Committee for Labor and Social Problems. I phoned him just before my departure for Shchekino.

"The Shchekino method was premature," he said, "which is why we have had to make corrections in it."

Premature? But recall what a sensation this experiment in economics at the Shchekino Chemical Combine, known more properly today as the "Azot" Association, made in the late 1960s. In just 3 years of the experiment a thousand workers were freed--that is, one out of every seven, and the combine's production increased by a factor of two. A fantastic take-off! My colleagues wrote about the "Shchekino miracle" with bated breath, and they drew rosey pictures of what might be if the achievements of the combine were to be spread over the entire Soviet Union. The figures were impressive. And all mention of personnel shortages was to disappear forever.

Let me explain: The Shchekino experiment, which later on became a method that could be applied equally well by all, arose mainly as a means of combatting a personnel shortage. It made it possible to move workers from enterprises and occupation groups in which they were in overabundance to ones in which they were clearly lacking. But if a shortage is to be covered by a surplus, enterprises and institutions must be made interested in doing with a smaller number of people. This problem is not as simple as it sounds, because certain business conditions encourage us to maintain another strategy--doing everything we can to create surpluses, to accumulate "reserves" of materials, equipment and working hands....

And so, what happened? Was the method up to its task? Fifteen years went by, and not only did the personnel shortage in the country not decrease, it has been increasing with every year. And with this increase comes an entire range of economic and social problems; because of a shortage of people, shops stand idle, the lines of people waiting for services grow, and labor discipline declines. What role, then, has introduction of the Shchekino method played in solving these problems? If we believe the statistics, the method is being utilized in its entirety at a thousand and a half of the country's enterprises, and in part at 8,000. With its help, about 200,000 workers have been freed, owing to which 350 new shops and production operations have been manned in just chemical industry alone. You must agree that the method has "worked," and not that bad at all. But much more had been expected of it. Even in Tul'skaya Oblast, where owing to efforts by party organs the method was introduced more extensively than in other oblasts, the manpower shortage is chronic. And even in Shchekino itself, where 1,800 persons were freed by just the chemical combine alone, the construction organizations have 30 percent of their job openings unfilled!

So where does the problem lie? Is the method itself imperfect, or was it applied incorrectly?

The Well-Forgotten Past

What is the essence of the Shchekino experiment? The combine's collective was confronted with a proposal: Produce the same amount of products with a fewer number of workers, and the entire wage fund will be yours--spread it among those who remain with the combine. That sounds like a good deal, does it not? For a long time I searched for the author of this remarkable idea. It was later on, in Shchekino, that local gossip suggested to me this version: The idea for the

experiment was imported from Canada by Petr Mikhaylovich Sharov, who was the director of the chemical combine at that time.

"Really, from Canada?" I asked Petr Mikhaylovich.

He laughed, and then he uttered:

"I've never even been to Canada!"

As it turns out, the idea was not new. It was born and it was successfully realized back in 1921. A decree of the Council for Labor and Defense bearing V. I. Lenin's signature reads: "The sum provided to an enterprise for wages is not to be decreased if the number of its workers decreases owing to improvements; an enterprise is to be provided such sums in keeping with the results of its work, and not on the basis of the number of persons on its employment roster."

In just a few months all of the enterprises participating in that experiment (they included the famous "Serp i Molot," "Krasnoye Sormovo" and "Trekhgornaya Manufaktura") managed to sharply increase their production volume and consequently their labor productivity, and reduce the frequency of unexcused absences. This turned out to be a powerful stimulus for growth in labor productivity. And take note, it was applied at the very peak of unemployment. One can imagine how many reasons there existed at that time for deliberately retaining surplus manpower at the plants and factories!! But in those years this approach seemed to be based on solid principles. "Given the existing organization of labor, presence of extra workers not needed for production at the factories and plants is a crime before the working class"--so said Feliks Dzerzhinskiy, and he, as we know, was able to separate real proletarian humanitarianism from philanthropy. After all, the most humanitarian thing to do in those conditions was to quickly raise the productivity of social labor.

Then almost half a century later this idea was resurrected in Shchekino. Why there? To answer this question, let us recall that in the Eighth Five-Year Plan the country rebuilt its mineral fertilizer industry almost in its entirety. Chemical production operations began appearing everywhere at that time, especially in the nonchernozem zone, but there were no experienced hands to run them. Thus the only hope was that existing enterprises would share some of their personnel with the new plants. Without detriment to their operations, of course. But this required the appropriate economic conditions. And so the Ministry of Chemical Industry, which had the greatest interest in this effort, developed the conditions of the experiment. It was proposed first to one, and then another, and a third, and finally a sixteenth enterprise within the sector. But they all rejected it outright. It was then that Deputy Minister of Chemical Industry Konstantin Konstantinovich Cheredenchenko made a personal visit to Shchekino.

The reader might expect me to say at this point that all of the 16 cautious enterprises are now in the loser's circle, that innovation has been rewarded, and that it has taken the lead over conservatism. But what do I learn in Shchekino today? The chemical combine is in a slump: It has failed its five-year plan, and its personnel turnover is high; moreover it is losing truly irreplaceable workers, since each of them knows three or four specialties. The reason for the turnover

is that for 5 years in succession the combine has not received a single apartment from the builders.

Is this not a paradox? After all, the chemical combine did model service in the Eighth and Ninth five-year plans. Here is what was written in PRAVDA a year and a half ago by the first secretary of the Shchekino city party committee, Grigoriy Ivanovich Grotseskul: "The Shchekino combine--the sector's flagship--has suffered another and perhaps the largest 'shipwreck.' While enjoying fabulous production indicators, it nevertheless settled on financial shallows which caused difficulties even in paying the people their wages. And, we should recall, not at all at the fault of the collective."

Today the chemical combine is ridiculed and rebuked from all of the city's rostrums in the same company with neglected primitive plants. Why? For failure of its five-year plan. But the combine does have its reasons, the most respectable one being that the builders let it down: They failed to complete the new buildings in time, and the plan for the chemical combine was approved with a consideration for these buildings. But in such cases the plan is always corrected! I know that kindred enterprises, even ones not enjoying extenuating circumstances, often make use of this possibility for correcting their situations. So why did Shchekino's "Azot" Association put itself above such a solution?

"We cannot do that!" was the categorical reply given to me by Nikolay Romanovich Melent'yev, the combine's present director. "Our actions are based on the Method and its authority! We do not have the moral right to work poorly or to accept charity. People come to us to learn, after all, and everyone watches how we work!"

I came across the same high morality among most of the combine's workers. For a long time I could not understand where it came from. I asked many to explain, including the combine's chief designer, Lev Nikolayevich Arapov, and two of his colleagues, Radzin and Lebedev. Interrupting one another, they described with relish the enthusiasm with which the experiment was started in its time:

"When it came to a choice between 'must' and 'may,' the former always won out. At that time we placed very high demands upon both ourselves and others."

"Your great fellow countryman," I recalled to them, "said: 'People live either beyond their conscience or below their conscience.' Are you saying that at that moment you were living 'beyond your conscience'?"

"To a certain extent, yes," Radzin agreed.

"And it's the same today!" Arapov uttered resolutely.

"How did this come about?"

"It was a product of the experiment," Radzin suggested, and Arapov clarified:

"Strange as it may seem, a certain inertia is inherent both to the individual and to the collective. There was inertia and sluggishness in our combine, which we had to surmount. The experiment helped us to do so."

Several weeks later I heard the same thing from USSR Minister of Mineral Fertilizer Production Aleksey Georgiyevich Petrishchev: "The Shchekino method's aim was to surmount negative habits and inertia."

But once again we arrive at a paradox: The method came into being as a weapon against inertia in management, or more accurately against mismanagement, but it itself became mired within it as in quicksand.

I know that one paradox cannot be used to explain another, but the time for their explanation is upon us. Let me begin with spring 1967, when the idea of the experiment seemed fantastic to everyone at the combine.

A Sociological Digression: The Personnel Situation

What exactly is our personnel problem? A shortage? Or a surplus, perhaps? Or, as some assure us, a shortage in the presence of a surplus?

The personnel shortage has transformed today into the strongest argument of just about every business controversy. Many business managers have now come to realize that they simply need to pronounce these magic words, and they will be forgiven plan failures, breaches of contract and low quality work (what alternative could there be?). They wield this bugbear so frequently that one involuntarily recalls that just 5-7 years ago the blame was placed in the same way on supply, and before that on planning.

But how can we doubt the existence of a personnel shortage when all window cases and fences bear "Wanted" signs appealing plaintively to passers-by who don't even notice them? The expression "There are no workers"--this is a standard explanation for many woes--can be heard in practically all cities near and far.

"There's a limit to everything: There is nowhere else to look for unemployed hands!"--this thought is often stated by some economists explaining the personnel situation mainly by the complexity of the demographic situation--a drop in the birth rate, aging of the population and the demographic backlash of the war. We should add to this that the number of college students has been increasing in our country from one year to the next. Here are some figures: In 1960-1961 the country's VUZs and tekhnikums had an enrollment of a million and a half young people, while in 1979-1980 their enrollment was as much as nine and eight-tenths of a million. And thus beginning with the Seventh Five-Year Plan the increment in the employed population decreased from one year to the next, such that it decreased by a factor of five by the 12th Five-Year Plan. And if we consider, as some scholars reason, that our industry is expanding intensively, a collision occurs between two opposing trends, thus producing the shortage.

But there is another point of view on this problem: The personnel shortage is fictitious, and there actually is a manpower surplus. Where can we find proof of this? In official statistics. For example in comparison with the USA, labor productivity in the country's industry in 1977 was 55 percent lower, while the effectiveness of the labor of the average Soviet engineer was three and six-tenths lower than that of the American engineer. Behind these figures rises a gigantic reserve of workers totaling tens of millions of persons. How can we put them to work?

Our largest manpower reserves are presently in the "unskilled manual labor" category. One out of every three workers in the national economy is in this category. Manual labor is being decreased in our country at a snail's pace: six percent in 10 years. How many decades must we wait?

Nothing would be simpler, it seems! Need workers? Then take energetic steps to mechanize and automate, and you'll find yourself with as many people as you need! Incidentally, this is precisely what was done in regions of the country suffering a highly acute labor shortage--in Latvia and in Zaporozhskaya and Chelyabinskaya oblasts. But to be honest, even there the manual labor problem was solved in a primitive way. Simply because bureaucratic isolation is keeping us from solving the problem on a statewide scale! Here is just one example. The largest number of manual laborers are employed not in principal but in auxiliary production operations and services. But if we are to free them, we must close down hundreds of thousands of small primitive shops, and the problems of getting tools and intermediate products, repairing machine tools and so on would have to be solved on the basis of territorial cooperation. But alas, there is resistance, since every business administration prefers to act on the basis of the old principle that "it might be bad, but it's our own."

Now let us look at the work losses suffered due to nonrhythmical production. Who can possibly not know that 50-70 percent of the monthly production plan, and not a third, is completed in the last 10-day period of the month? Imagine how many extra workers must be kept in reserve so that such crash campaigns could be possible! About seven and a half million workers can be freed, Professor Ye. Manevich asserts, by doing away with "whole-day" losses of working time.

The variants of labor losses are legion. An example of a usually inefficient practice is that of sending enterprise and institution workers out for work in the field, to construction projects and to vegetable processing bases. This practice has been condemned resoundingly from all rostrums.

But what is most disturbing of all is that enterprises possessing significant manpower reserves are in no hurry at all to free them, or at least to use them to fill empty work stations in their own shops. How can we explain this paradox, when every enterprise and every institution is truly interested today in surplus manpower? The motive can be found in the still-existing system of "planning on the basis of former achievements," in the present practice of forming the enterprise's funds and in the provision that the salaries of executives are directly dependent on the number of personnel in the enterprise. Encouraging people to economize on state labor resources under these conditions is not very promising. Here is what Vitaliy Moyev wrote about this 10 years ago in his book "Shchekinskiy stimul" [The Shchekino Stimulus]: "An enterprise is awarded its rank on the basis of the number of its personnel--that's one. The more people, the larger the bonus fund--that's two...." And nothing has yet been changed in this regard.

V. Nemchenko, an economist, suggests introducing a system of payment based on the number of work stations. This, he argues, would change the devil-may-care attitude of enterprises toward their work force, which costs them almost nothing. A system of payment based on fixed capital has been introduced, but has the use of fixed capital gotten any better since that time? Consider that it is the treasury that must pay, and not the wasteful business administrators out of their own pockets.

But now let us stand in their shoes for a moment. Imagine the supply interruptions, the feverish efforts to catch up to the plan, and the perpetual requisitioning of people from the enterprise for all sorts of crash campaigns. How can we survive such situations without retaining a reserve of working hands as insurance?

And so, the figures for the labor reserves, both concealed and visible, are such that one feels uncomfortable somehow, talking about a labor shortage. Nevertheless it does exist. A personnel surplus, it turns out, does not exclude a shortage. Feast and famine.... In general we may have a surplus, but in particular we have a shortage. What do we mean by particular? In certain oblasts and rayons, at certain enterprises and in certain occupations. The shortage can be felt everywhere, even in the republics of Central Asia, where it is commonly thought an enormous source of labor exists. But this labor is scattered through the countryside, while urban enterprises are sometimes unable to find anyone to work.

Is a relative shortage any easier or an enterprise than an absolute shortage? If an enterprise lacks 200 machine tool operators, they could not be replaced by 500 engineers available in abundance, and 10 empty longshoreman slots cannot be filled by even 30 extra bookkeepers. What these enterprises face is what we refer to as a structural shortage, where the structure of the work stations is not consistent with the structure of the available workers. And this problem may be solved by redistributing the work force from some regions of the country into others, from some enterprises into others and from some occupations and specialties into others. But is there a dependable tool of such redistribution? There is! It is called the Shchekino method.

They All Got to Thinking: Would it be possible to...

The first reaction was the sort we see in response to unexpected discoveries: "This can't be true!"

This, according to the stories I heard, is how the workers of Shchekino responded to the first proposal for the experiment. I was pleased to find that all of the people I interviewed spoke honestly: Yes, they admitted, the proposal had them scared. They agreed to the experiment, but with great reluctance. They were all apprehensive of the confusion--what if it doesn't work, the mishaps--the explosion and fire danger of the production operation was high, the human conflicts--some of the "surplus" workers might not want to leave the collective, and the plan failures--there would no longer be a manpower reserve, meaning that there would be no one to help catch up to the plan.

Why, then, did they agree? What stimulus turned out to be stronger than fear?

"Experimentation adds spice to life. When the plan is regularly met and surpassed, the work becomes boring, and one gets the feeling that much more could be done."

We would have to agree that this statement is not typical of an enterprise director. But Petr Mikhaylovich Sharov was in fact an unusual director. Had this not been so, there would never have been a Shchekino experiment, or at least it would have gone under another name. It was harder for him to decide, as the director, than for anyone else. Were anything to go wrong, he would be the first on the

carpet. He also admits today that he was scared, but he never betrayed his doubts to anyone at that time. Instead, his decisiveness and his confidence in success raised the excitement of those who were reluctant and, on the opposite pole, reduced the excitement of the anxious.

But what about the workers themselves?

"Many, of course, would not agree at first," explained senior instrument controller Vladimir Aleksandrovich Popov. He is one of those rare people referred to by sociologists as "informal leaders of a collective." "What were they scared of? The work would be harder, because there would be more of it. Why did they agree? The extra money, primarily. And not because we immediately became so conscientious. We were going to be paid well, they promised us. After all of the dust settled, the senior instrument controller found himself with an extra 35 rubles over his standard wage. Then there are the bonuses to consider. Let's say 45 or 50 rubles in the pocket. Sounds pretty good, doesn't it?"

I would like to mention a fundamentally important point that makes the real Shchekino method different from an imitation. The obligation to make do with fewer people was accepted not by the administration but by the entire collective. The executives--both administrative and public--did what they could to make the experiment truly the will of the collective. Competently organized propaganda on the method made it possible to break down the rather numerous psychological barriers in the way of the experiment. How often, in the haste of introducing an innovation, we forget or ignore this highly important phase of introduction! In Shchekino, all of the pitfalls were honestly explained, an attempt was made to alleviate possible apprehensions, they preferred to keep all of the problems out in the open, and they tried to solve all of the most important problems as a group. The experiment began in the chemical combine very democratically, and thus it evoked a tidal wave of activity. Here is just one figure that can explain so much--during the experiment, 160 efficiency proposals were submitted for every 100 workers of the combine.

And here is another indicator: During the experiment there was not a single anonymous letter, not a single complaint. This was because the administration kept no secrets. Everyone understood what was going on, and why it had to be this way!

I read in Vitaliy Moyev's book, which I mentioned above, that at that time the Shchekino combine experienced a personnel turnover. People left the combine for personal reasons having nothing to do with the experiment, and when they did so, their slots were eliminated. This, Moyev wrote, made it possible to avoid the pain of laying people off.

I think, however, that some people did have to leave the combine unwillingly as well.

"The problem solved itself quite simply," Popov continued his story. "Those who weren't very good at their jobs knew that they wouldn't last, they wouldn't be able to make it when the work load got larger."

"Those who didn't like work left on their own," instrument controller Zakhar Karimovich Galiaskarov added.

This was a mistake. It made itself known a few years later, when it was too late to correct it. The mistake became obvious to me when I compared two figures: At the beginning of the experiment the average age at the combine was 27 years, while 14 years later--that is, last year--it was 41. Thus we find that the combine grew older during these years.

"Of course," Popov commented, "the ones that left were basically those with low qualifications, mainly the young."

"Did this show foresight on your part?"

"Not at all."

And today, workers in the methanol shop say:

"We're not going to be here all of our lives, we're going to retire, but where are the young people to take our places?"

And so one personnel error was accidentally, inadvertently made, one which is now making itself known. Another was made by the ministry, which failed to consider the real situation at the combine and stopped sending it college graduates. The logic was simple: Why send more engineers when the combine is reducing their number?

"I'm sure you realize yourself," Svetlana Nikolayevna Afanas'yeva, the deputy secretary of the combine's party committee, encouraged me to believe, "what the absence of an influx of fresh engineering thought can mean to any enterprise."

I realized it all right, but it is hard to describe how much the combine had to pay for the fact that all of the shop executives were lacking a higher education and that, moreover, they had no support from younger and better-educated assistants.

But how can we blame the Shchekino workers for these mistakes--after all, they were traveling an untrodden road?! One can only hope that those who continue on this road after them will learn from their mistakes. But this is where things break down. The invaluable experience of the Shchekino pioneers has not yet been gathered together, or described, or analyzed, or generalized or disseminated. Even economists in chemical industry--I know this to be a fact--have only a very general understanding of the Shchekino method, and even that is sometimes distorted. Much of the blame for this lies with our scientists, who sometimes fail to consider the future in their work. From the very beginning and to this day, the Shchekino experiment was never organized as a scientific experiment. Even the sector's economics institute failed to make its mark. And a book published by the sector on this topic, "Shchekinsk metod" [The Shchekino Method] was written by K. Chernichenko and L. Gol'din on a part-time basis. And therefore we still have no scientific conclusions as to whether the Shchekino method is good or bad, specialized or universal, timely or premature.

Science failed to help the Shchekino workers, and therefore they had to do everything for themselves. They came up with the idea, for example, of creating 12 public commissions to deal with the method's introduction. These commissions became a powerful support to the administration. One of them dealt with personnel problems. This commission sought out and created jobs for people laid off from the combine. It did so by writing kindred enterprises in other cities and studying all job opportunities in the city of Shchekino itself.

"This was our motto," Petr Mikhaylovich Sharov recalled, "'the fewer workers remaining here, the easier their work should be'."

The experiment's organizers had enough wisdom to eliminate primarily the hardest, most primitive or most harmful functions of the labor process, transferring them to automatic equipment. And thus the experiment provided the motive for the combine's reequipment and, moreover, for a technical revolution at the combine. This was based not only on a concern for making the working conditions of the people comfortable, but also on the apprehension that the reserves lying on the surface would not last the combine long. They would have to dig deeper. Who? Mainly the engineers. I can understand now that the Shchekino experiment, and especially the second and third phases of its introduction, required a colossal amount of support from the engineers. Here is another example told to me by Sharov:

"Chemical production, as you might know, entails very many parameters that must be monitored. Before we could release about 100 laboratory assistants, we had to reduce our analyses by a million per year. What does this mean? Each analysis was strictly planned into the production process. Before we could do away with an analysis, we had to deal with many planning institutes, we had to persuade and encourage them, and then we had to solve the problems of automating control ourselves."

I know how many valuable initiatives fail half-way because the engineers do not seem to have their heart in it. It is difficult to catch their interest with money: The wrong principles are used as a basis for paying engineers and technicians, and this is a hindrance. The social stimuli of labor, ones which generate the concept of "we," can also be weak. But in this case, in Shchekino, it turned out to be the principal motive of hard and honest work.

Taking a tea break with Popov and Zakhar Galiaskarov, I listened to their story of how they came here from the Bashkir ASSR a quarter of a century ago, how happy their lives were in the dormitory in those days--much more happy than today in their spacious, well furnished apartments. And all the while, I kept trying to get the conversation back to the method.

"Have things become more orderly at the combine since the experiment?" I asked.

"Yes, of course," Popov said without hesitation.

"The main thing is discipline and order," Galiaskarov pronounced somewhat didactically, "we can't do without discipline!"

"But what is it based on?"

"On consciousness," Popov replied.

"Does that mean everyone has become conscientious?" I exclaimed in disbelief.

"Not right away," Popov spoke deeply. "It began with people like Zakhar," he nodded toward his friend. "He set the example, which was then followed by a second and a third, then they brought a fourth over to their side, and the fifth had nowhere else to go, so he went along with them. You can't expect instant success...."

Let me interrupt my fellow conversants at this point to cite something said by Anton Semenovich Makarenko having the most direct bearing upon our conversation: "In the commune (imeni Dzerzhinskiy--*A.R.*), I was able to create a situation permitting the collective to transform into a remarkable creative, strict, precise and omniscient force on its own. Such a thing cannot be done on command; such a collective cannot be created in 2 or 3 years; such a collective takes several years to create. It is a precious, exceptionally precious thing. But after such a collective is created, it must be cared for, and then the entire educational process goes on much more easily."

And so it was that such a foundation--a self-creating and self-organizing collective--came into being at Shchekino and became the support for all of the technical and social transformations; it became the force behind the experiment. The fact that Makarenko was able to mold one commune collective and then another can be found described in detail in his articles and books. But nowhere can we find information about how a labor collective, in the highest sense of the term, comes into being. Even in our sociology this is still an uncharted region. This is why executives find themselves in total confusion when they are overwhelmed by the immensity of the task of creating a collective unified on the basis of moral principles, one which would assume a role in socioeconomic transformations.

"Does this mean," I queried my partners in conversation, "that the sense of being in charge came into being within the combine?"

"Perhaps, yes," Galiaskarov said indecisively.

"Not perhaps, but definitely yes!" Popov summed up.

"They all got to thinking: Would it be possible to...." This refrain could be heard in almost all of the statements made by my partners in conversation. I began to realize from very many clues at the combine that there was something here which could be referred to as a sense of collective ownership. How did it come about? To say that it did so "in the course of the experiment" would be to say very little. But it is difficult to pinpoint it any more closely. Many who have written about the "Shchekino miracle" have avoided this point, despite the fact that it is crucial to an understanding of the entire essence of the matter. "Something which would seem to be simple and very commonplace--a proprietary attitude toward the public wealth--is becoming the backbone of economic policy...." This is what L. I. Brezhnev said at the 26th CPSU Congress.

Once at a small factory which could count only on its own strength to raise itself out of its mediocrity, I studied everything that was keeping the collective from recognizing itself as the true master of production. The main hindrance, it turned out, was an "isolationist economy" existing in the form of an individual piece-work system in which everyone fended for himself. The workers were hindered by their attachment to an outdated but habitual order of things. A bureaucratic style of management, in which the administrator requires neither collective will nor collective wisdom and, consequently, a collective master, was a hindrance. The organizational helplessness of the collective, its inability to determine and pursue its own common interest, hog-tied the collective as well.

I can imagine that such barriers also existed in Shchekino, but that they were surmounted. The main thing that helped them was the new economic situation that came with the experiment. This is what was written in PRAVDA about this: "The experiment was based on three anchor points: stable production throughout the five-year plan with the quotas distributed evenly over the years, an unchanged wage fund, and the right to additional payment for intensification of labor." If we look at these conditions in light of the way things are today, the combine did not really receive all that much. To it, however, this meant the right to be its own boss. After a few years the people at the combine came to believe that whatever they earned, they would receive; whatever ideas they came up with would be to the benefit of both the individual and his collective. There was reason for Vasiliy Mikhaylovich Suslyak, the secretary of the Tul'skaya Oblast party committee, to say on one occasion: "The Shchekino system signifies an end to disinterested business management."

The Mandates of a Vote of Confidence

No one would attempt to debate the fact that the experiment would never have come into existence, had the collective not accepted and then supported it. I will not attempt to cover up the fact that the experiment meant possible difficulties for many. Of course they all knew that in our country they would not be left without work. But everyone was faced by the threat of disrupting the old way of life, of having to part with a collective that had become home, with a job that had become safe and secure in its routine. Would things ever be the same again in a new job, if I suddenly had to leave? And if I remained, would I fit in with the new ways? Would the larger loads be excessive or too unusual for me? Will I be able to master a new piece of machinery or a new occupation? These questions plagued everybody.

But there were also other people at the combine who felt that they had done well for themselves, that they were receiving more than they were giving, that they were occupying positions above their qualifications and competency. They were well aware that they would suffer, on losing their undeserved privileges. To them the experiment was an obviously hostile adversary, and they responded with equal hostility, attempting to elicit negative reactions in their colleagues.

Many in the combine, after all, had doubts that could not be placated. Would they deceive us, they worried, would they keep to their promise in full? After all, many times before some great venture, workers have been flooded with promises as if from a horn of plenty, only to find out later that what was promised was "beyond our means."

Combine director Sharov and his assistants realized that here as never before, they needed the mandate of a vote of confidence from below. It may have been thought that the extra money alone would have immediately brought all of the workers to the side of the experiment. But no, there was a tremendous amount of work to do before anyone could even think about extra money. Would the people respond?

Now we know: Respond they did. Hundreds of people engaged themselves in what sociologists might have referred to as "normogenesis," creation of new "rules of the game"--the standards of activity and behavior. For this purpose they employed flexible forms of organization, commissions and creative brigades, ones in which public participation in administration was embodied. And so it happened that hundreds of people became voluntary propagandists of the method--its adherents and zealous defendants. Had this not been so, the method would not have been thought out so carefully, or supported so well in engineering, organizational and social respects.

It is now important to account for all of the lessons of Shchekino, and mainly the fact that this collective of many thousands of workers unanimously preferred the social stimulus over the material one.

It is not at all my intention for the reader to take me too literally, and immediately dispense with material stimuli, the possibilities of which are being far from fully utilized as a means for increasing labor productivity. Moreover, even the principle itself of payment in keeping with services rendered has not yet fully triumphed: It is being attacked on all sides by the traditions of equality.

But material stimuli alone, no matter how sizeable they might be, are not enough for our workers. Keep the extra money, they say, but give us interesting work, comfortable working conditions, good relations with colleagues and administrators, and the possibilities for professional and career advancement. Dissatisfaction often arises when just one of these factors of "total happiness" is lacking.

This need displayed by today's workers for "maximum satisfaction" has manifested itself clearly at almost all enterprises in which the Shchekino method was introduced. In this case the more that attention was devoted to social stimuli, the more successfully the method's introduction went on. The Shchekino workers themselves believe that one of the most serious barriers in the way of the Shchekino initiative was the utilitarian approach of the administrators, who placed their main emphasis on material stimulation and ignored moral enrichment and improvement of the quality of labor.

A sociological study of the attitude of workers to the method was studied at the Kazan' "Orgsintez" Association in the short period of time between when the method was first introduced and the moment the first resulting bonuses were paid. It was found that although no one had yet enjoyed the material advantages, an attitude toward the method had already managed to form. There was unanimous acceptance of it. The workers found that the method brought with it labor of greater substance, of greater creativity, that it demands growth of the qualifications of the laborers, and that it raises the unity of the collective.

And inasmuch as the Shchekino workers themselves brought about a "technical revolution" in connection with the experiment, the changes in the work were obvious to all. Here is the general conclusion arrived at in the book by K. Cherednichenko and L. Gol'din: "Wherever the possibilities of the Shchekino method were utilized extensively, the average rank of the workers increased by a factor of 0.4-0.6; the rate of reduction of the proportion of heavy, harmful and low-skilled labor doubled; turnover, violations of labor discipline and misdemeanors declined by two or three times."

But these figures reflect the overall trends which revealed themselves at all enterprises working according to the Shchekino method. At the Shchekino "Azot" Association itself, meanwhile, the trends revealed themselves even more clearly. Here are the figures I received straight from the mouth of the combine's former director, Petr Mikhaylovich Sharov: "While in 1966, before the experiment, the number of unexcused absences was 556, in 1975 there were only 26 of them." That is, 20 times fewer!

Who could have guessed that the first benefits the combine was to enjoy would have been the elimination of absentees and other discipline violators! And many of them probably changed their ways after this, since nothing corrupts violators more than a situation of impunity, coupled with a halo of irreplaceability. The atmosphere of indifference toward one another disappeared here, to be replaced by a dependence of each upon the collective and of the collective upon each. Young workers began growing, raising their qualifications faster. While before the experiment it took 5-8 years for them to go from the lowest to the highest rung, after the method was introduced it took 2-3 years. The fact is that in former times such growth was the personal business of each individual, and now it became the business of the entire brigade or section.

The results of a sociological study conducted at 16 chemical industry enterprises in 1969-1971 and 1975-1976 revealed the following social effects of the method's introduction:

"I am well aware of the conditions of the Shchekino method"--68 percent of all responses;

"I get extra money because of the method"--69 percent;

"I feel that it is advantageous to the enterprise and to the workers"--72 percent;

"Owing to the method, the effectiveness and quality of my work have risen"--71 percent;

"Owing to the method, the democratic foundations of leadership have grown stronger, and the participation of laborers in administration has broadened"--59 percent.

These data speak for themselves: The workers voted in favor of the method. But what we have before us are the simplest possible sociological dependencies, since all studies of this sort have been performed by amateurs, rather than by professional sociologists. Moreover sociologists had not participated in the practical efforts to explain the method, and therefore the social possibilities of the method

have been realized and utilized to only an insignificant extent. Consider this in light of the fact that the Shchekino method is not only a means of raising labor productivity, which is important in and of itself, but it is also a tool of social development, and a very effective one at that.

Many delicate psychological issues arose in the course of its introduction. These also had to be solved on a trial-and-error basis--not at all on a scientific foundation. For example when the Polotsk "Polimir" Association introduced the method, the decision was made to form the brigades on the basis of leisure interests. Thus arose brigades of "mushroom hunters," "fishermen," "sportsmen," "singers" and so on. This was clearly a profanation of the social approach to administration, but the "reformists" were not corrected in time.

There is another social effect of the Shchekino method that must be considered: Permitting an enterprise to do with a smaller number of people, the method creates a possibility for economizing on the "social infrastructure," since the need for additionally creating the entire complex of personal, housing and cultural services is eliminated. It was presumed at the combine that the social blessings already in existence, when apportioned among a smaller number of workers, would raise the effectiveness of their labor. But this did not happen, inasmuch as the enormous social cultural and personal funds earned by the combine could not be invested in additional efforts to improve housing or build new cultural institutions.

I recall my conversation with Rem Aleksandrovich Belousov, chairman of the department of control of socioeconomic processes, Academy of the Social Sciences, CPSU Central Committee. Taking as his starting point the lessons of the Shchekino method, he said:

"Today, efforts to alter administrative thinking must be tied in closely with social issues. We still refer to our administrators as production commanders. But today, to simply command people is not enough. All business leaders are obligated to master the science and art of human relations. We are clearly making inadequate use of the social factors of production, and sometimes we simply ignore them. An obvious example of what this leads to is a turnover of 20-30 percent, which we often see. It is usually a rare thing for the workers at large to be asked to take part in the writing of plans and in the solution of the pressing problems of the enterprise. And when I hear the frequent appeals to widen the independence of business leaders, it comes to me that there is an even greater need for widening the rights of the labor collectives."

Yes, a social approach to production and administration would be unimagineable today without the presence of professional sociologists. But there are still few of them in our country, because for 10 years now the USSR Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education has been ignoring the demands of production and society, resisting introduction of professional sociological education. This is the reason why no sociologists participated in the Shchekino movement, and why they did not participate in the widespread introduction of the brigade contract or in dissemination of the experience of the Volga Motor Vehicle Plant. And all of this is now costing us dearly.

The Pernicious Force of Instructions

I have come across many businessmen who openly disbelieved the Shchekino method. Or if they believed in its possibilities, they categorically refused to introduce it. Here is what Grigoriy Ivanovich Grotsenkul, the first secretary of the Shchekino city party committee, said to me with a certain amount of amazement:

"The impression is created--there are many examples of this--that party organs are more interested in introducing the Shchekino method than are business organs."

I myself saw how a public commission of the city party committee did everything it could for many long years to encourage enterprise directors to accept the method. The latter, meanwhile, resisted, arguing with figures that they were not yet ready for it. Why, thought I, must businessmen be compelled, almost by force, to assume an innovative path, to accept a good thing?

Vasiliy Vladimirovich Semenov, chairman of the chemical industry division of the Tul'skaya Oblast party committee, suggested this explanation to me:

"Were you to take a look at Tula early in the morning from a helicopter, you would notice huge red "Ikarus" buses racing in different directions from the center of town. They are gathering up people from suburban towns and settlements and carrying them to work in the city. This is the way many of our plants are solving the manpower problem. This way of solving the personnel problem seems more advantageous to our businessmen than the Shchekino method."

Still, I would wish to understand the logic behind the behavior of the business leaders. I have been friends with many of them for many years, and it is difficult for me to believe that their main objective is to make their own lives easier. And even if this is their objective, why would they prefer to make their lives easier without taking on this remarkable method as their ally?

I am convinced that the Shchekino method is not simply a cure for a personnel shortage; it is *a means of economically conducting any effort*, making improvements in many directions concurrently. *The Shchekino stimulus forces an enterprise to constantly move forward*, to constantly improve production. The method does in fact make an administrator's live easier, because it helps him establish clear order in the administration and to maintain it by social control from below. It allows him to delegate the difficult problems of management to voluntary assistants; it gives birth to initiative and to creative independence at the bottom level, making these qualities a necessity in the work of every member of the collective. Under the conditions provided by the method, high moral and work qualities which usually take decades to develop are formed in just a few years.

Then why do many continue to steer clear of the Shchekino method? I posed this question to the workers of a certain shop. Here is what they replied:

"The management gets edgy. No matter what you say, the soul rests easier when there are more people to do the work...."

"Here, if one man doesn't make it to work and another is on vacation, there is nothing we can do; there's no way to replace the ones that are gone...."

Here is an example described to me by Konstantin Konstantinovich Cherednichenko, the deputy minister of chemical industry. A new plant was built and placed into operation at the "Kuybyshevazot" Association. It is working, and it is fulfilling its quotas, but the number of its employees exceeds the norm foreseen by the plan by a thousand and a half persons. Why? Because no one thought beforehand about personnel training, and even after production was started, no one created the conditions which would interest the workers in raising their qualifications. And here is another point. They are not in any hurry to implement the Shchekino method, even though its advantages are more than obvious: The extra people require 15 million rubles more of outlays just on housing construction alone.

But to understand why many businessmen are frightened away from this method, we would have to go into a few of the sad stories from the biography of the Shchekino chemical combine.

No matter where you go in the chemist settlement, you cannot get away from the strange-looking skeleton of an unfinished structure. "This is our Palace of Culture," the long-time residents explain with a smirk, "abandoned by the builders 13 years ago. Why? Because of the way they feel about us...."

And at the edge of the settlement I came across the gaping window frames of unfinished residential buildings. It was explained to me that this was not the first year they had been standing this way. Meanwhile workers sorely needed by the production operation leave the combine, being unable to secure housing.

Thus we find that the funds earned by the combine through honest work have been just so much deadweight for many years. "The builders do not have enough people"--this is the argument one hears almost universally.

For other enterprises of the city, the builders have done a great deal. They have been in no hurry with the chemical combine because the latter has been unable to supply hundreds of free helpers to the builders to do finishing jobs: It does in fact not have a single person to spare. This is precisely why the builders were so late in finishing the combine's production buildings, as a consequence of which it was unable to complete its five-year plan.

Is that as far as the problem goes? Not at all. While I was there, the chairman of a kolkhoz sponsored by the combine arrived for a visit. He felt himself to be the boss here, and one could feel from everything he said that he was sure the world owed him a living. He came to remind the administration that he expected the combine to furnish a hundred workers each day, and that a dormitory still had to be built. His sponsors were not opposed to this: The help was in fact needed by their country brethren. But the whole snag centered on the question as to where to get the people. Moreover the combine sponsors more than just a single sovkhoz. Also, people have to be sent out to the brick plant, to build roads and to pick vegetables.

Moreover, handing down assessments of the number of persons required of the enterprises and institutions, the executive committees do not want to know and have no intention of considering how much the manpower of each of them has been reduced owing to the Shchekino method. Which way can they turn when even their own ministries, when ordering each enterprise to reduce the size of their administrative staff, also categorically refuse to consider whether or not their enterprises had already relieved themselves of extra manpower? Thus it happens that enterprises that accept the method in good faith find themselves at a disadvantage in comparison with those which reject it.

The most essential condition of the experiment was that the enterprises were to share, among the remaining people, not only the wage fund but also all available social blessings. This means that in addition to getting higher wages, the innovators should receive greater possibilities for distributing housing and other social blessings. But this did not happen, to a great extent because the Shchekino workers were let down by their business partners, and mainly the builders, as I mentioned earlier. And even the combine's ministry itself soon began short-changing the combine's honestly earned funds, transferring these assets to enterprises that had fallen behind. As a consequence the combine was unable to compensate its workers fully for the greater intensity of their labor and the higher nervous and mental loads they had to endure. One cannot but recall Lenin's words in this regard: "Hard work is to be preferred, but preference without consumption is nothing.... A preference for hard work is also a preference for consumption. Without this, hard work would be a dream, a substanceless cloud--something we cannot accept as materialists."

Every economic experiment is also an agreement reached by two sides. The combine kept to its word, but the other agreeing side broke it. Who, exactly? This is what we need to figure out.

"The Shchekino method existed in its most effective form only in the Eighth Five-Year Plan, and only at the Shchekino chemical combine."

This is what Vera Ivanovna Slepykh told me. For many years she had served as the senior economist and later the deputy director of the chemical combine. That is what she was officially, but in spirit she was the motive force and avid proponent of the method. Together with a group of her followers she received the USSR State Prize for its introduction, and she defended a candidate dissertation on this subject. But when barriers arose in the method's path she sounded the alarm, she appealed to all levels of authority, and she challenged all of the method's outspoken and reluctant enemies. Nevertheless she could not endure to the end, and she retired from the combine. She is now in Moscow, where she chairs a department in the sector's institute responsible for training production executives. In her official capacity as department chairman at the institute she publicizes her method. But she is perpetually angered by the distorted, and even twisted, eye with which her students view both the method and its possibilities.

"We achieved such clear results using just 20 percent of the method's possibilities"--this opinion of hers may sound a little too categorical, but it has been supported by the experience some CEMA countries have had with the Shchekino method.

Let me try to draw a line between the real Shchekino method and its imitations. Honestly speaking, this is a difficult line to draw. The instructions for applying this method, which is based on a very simple idea, go on in an infinite set of clauses and subclauses.

"Sometimes instructions lead us into a dead end, especially those which contradict the spirit and letter of the experiment. And the instructions of the Shchekino method are such that it is difficult to go along with them"--this is what one of our well known economists, Academician Abel Gezevich Aganbegyan, had to say about the situation with the Shchekino method. "I don't know why, but we do not seem to trust our business managers enough. I could understand the need for detailed instructions if this had been in the time of the first five-year plans, when many people without a higher education assumed executive positions at the enterprises. And even they were trusted in those days. But today, the executives are of an entirely different level. I, for example, am familiar with many enterprises in Siberia. Take as an example the executives of the Noril'sk Mining and Metallurgical Combine. These are high government officials! But sometimes they are not trusted to resolve even the most minor issues. How many castings to make for auxiliary needs, for example. Do you really think that they would go to the trouble of making extra castings they don't need?"

The way things worked out, after my converasation with Aganbegyan I telephoned Boris Mikhaylovich Sukharevskiy, an executive at the State Committee for Labor and Social Problems. It was he who said then: "The Shchekino method was premature, which is why we have had to make corrections in it." As he explained it, 10 years ago our business administrators were unconscientious; they used their powers, he said, in detriment to the national economy, and therefore all loopholes leaving room for various abuses had to be plugged with wisely conceived instructions. And when the business managers became more conscientious, the limitations on the method's broad application were removed.

But many party documents have long recognized business managers to be quite conscientious enough to conduct their affairs independently. As far as the alleged abuses are concerned, I would like to suggest some other opinions in this regard.

Take as an example Stanislav Nikolayevich Golubev, chief of a labor and industry planning subdivision at the USSR Gosplan. He knows everything having to do with the Shchekino method down to its finest details. He admitted to me in an interview that in their majority, executives of enterprises converted to the Shchekino method spent the extra money left to the enterprises very carefully. It was these savings that were the spark that started the entire controversy over the method. Here is what V. Parfenov and V. Shvetsov wrote about this is PRAVDA: "When the enterprises began a mass transition to work according to the Shchekino method, together with other administrative departments the USSR State Committee for Labor and Social Problems proposed new conditions for the experiment, ones differing significantly from those stated initially. First of all they deleted the clause which provided the right to carry over the bulk of the saved wages to the material incentive fund and leave it within the enterprise's collective treasury. In the second phase of the experiment in Shchekino, for example, they took almost 4 million rubles from the workers."

Thus it happened that while the hope was to save millions, billions were lost, and therefore from this moment on the Shchekino movement began its decline.

"Could you possibly name a single document which went contrary to the Shchekino method?" I did not know what Stanislav Nikolayevich Golubev was leading toward when he asked me this question.

"Whatever the case," I asked in turn, "why did four departments have to adopt a special decree in April 1978 reinstating the initial conditions of the Shchekino experiment?"

Such a decision was in fact made, and by it, many of the mistakes were corrected. But belief in the Shchekino method was never fully restored. Business executives are still refusing to have anything to do with it, because the economic conditions are still such that an enterprise which reveals the size of its reserves in good faith finds itself at a disadvantage. These conditions are created by the obsolete economic mechanism, by a line of business thought that is still persisting due to inertia, one criticized by L. I. Brezhnev at the 26th CPSU Congress.

"One prerequisite of the Shchekino method's application," continued Academician Aganbegyan, "is for the ministry and the main administration to end their interference in the activities of the enterprises, and their attempts at changing the indicators. Assume for example that you are the chief of a main administration," he said to me. "Assume you have 10 plants. You have converted five of them to the Shchekino method, and five have not been converted. One of the plants fails to reach its quota. What would you do in this case? Under normal conditions you might transfer some personnel and funds, but in the conditions of the Shchekino method, you would no longer be able to do so...."

To make this still more comprehensible, the academician suggested the following concrete example:

"I am well acquainted with the experience of the Omsk Petrochemical Combine. This enterprise, which is not all that young, increased its labor productivity by 2 percent a year. Then, at the beginning of the Ninth Five-Year Plan, it was converted to the Shchekino method, and in 5 years it increased its productivity by 48 percent. But during all these years the Ministry of Petroleum Refining and Petrochemical Industry was unenthusiastic about this enterprise's assumption of the Shchekino method. And its indifference won out in the end: At the beginning of the 10th Five-Year Plan the method was scrapped at the plant, and now its labor productivity is once again growing by 2 percent a year. But the ministry is satisfied. Why? Because it can change its indicators each year."

Is this a unique case? Here is what is said in a letter from Ye. Chapa, chief of the department of technical control at Serpukhov: "I would like to share my thoughts about the Shchekino method. We all realize how useful and effective it is. But its applications are few and far between. I was astounded this summer when I learned that our superiors prohibit its use in enterprises of our sector. Why?, I asked. The answer I got was simple: Because you can't. I think that the problem here lies with executives who have a fear of failure."

Is the First Swallow to Take Wing or Not?

"Stop pestering me with your m.chod!" was the first thing that Melent'yev, the new director, said to the chief economist of the combine after replacing Sharov, who was seriously ill. And so the rumors spread through the city: The director of "Azot" was against the method that originated in this association.

But further inspection showed that this was far from so. Nikolay Romanovich Melent'yev had himself been one of the initiators of the efforts to introduce the Shchekino method at the Novomoskovsk "Azot" Association, from which he had come. He was prepared to preserve all of the Shchekino traditions here at the combine. But he discovered that the chemical combine was in deep trouble: Its shortfall in the annual plan was 12 million rubles, even though we know that it was working as hard as it could! Thus was Melent'yev not justified in concluding that all of the woes of the combine stemmed from the fact that the Shchekino method was not compatible with the existing economic situation? It worked much harder than others, but its rewards were worse than the lagging enterprises. Here is an example. Last year the chemical combine's wages were among the lowest of the 25 enterprises of "Soyuzazot." And in comparison with its neighbors in Shchekino, it was clearly at a disadvantage.

"In neighboring enterprises," Melent'yev said, "an instrument controller receives 600 rubles and services one piece of machinery. But one of our instrument controllers must service three pieces of machinery for the same 600 rubles. Why? When in 1975 the new wage scale was introduced, for some reason its drafters forgot that the Shchekino association was working according to a method presupposing that the employees were receiving additional payments. As a result, very many of the laborers were deprived of this extra money."

What we obviously have here is a case of equalization, one which encourages parasitism and renders the stimuli of hard work powerless. Why try harder, enterprise directors reason, when no matter what we do, our effort would be ignored and everything would be reduced to one common denominator?! Such equalization sometimes comes about out of the most noble motives--to help an unfortunate enterprise finding itself in the hole! But the way things turned out, after a while some ministries began to be especially generous with those who groaned the loudest, with those who were able to create the appearance of dispair, forcing the leading enterprises to pay their bills. "All you need to do to get assistance from outside is to learn how to cause the main production line to fail!"--this is a "trick" I heard at one well known plant. And so we find that enterprises sometimes try to outdo each other in causing the ministry's plan to fail.

"First let's solve the personnel problem, and then reinstate the method"--this is what Melent'yev intended to do. But then he found that the method was no longer distinguishable from the combine. It has entered into the fabric of the combine's work and the psychology and thinking of its people. Then Melent'yev formulated his task differently: "Restore the method's authority!" This is what he decided to do. He argued at all levels that he was not asking for something extra--only that which rightfully belonged to the combine, that which it earned in good faith. But then he found that the whole problem lay not in a wrong interpretation by some particular executive in the ministry, but rather in the well known practice

of "planning on the basis of former achievements," which is fundamentally contradictory to the Shchekino method.

"At the very beginning of the experiment," I was told by Vasiliy Mikhaylovich Suslyak, second secretary of the Tul'skaya Oblast party committee, "we felt that the people still had their doubts: Who is to say that we won't return to the old system of planning 'on the basis of achievements' after a little while? We in turn assured them: That will never be! But alas, return we did. They're now manipulating the plans any way they like!" Vasiliy Mikhaylovich said in a burst of indignation. "They increase the plan six or seven times a year for many of our enterprises. How can we possibly use the Shchekino method under such conditions?"

"Why are the plans changed so often?" I asked Stanislav Nikolayevich Golubev during that same interview at Gosplan.

He blamed the fickleness of the economy and the fact that everything could not be foreseen beforehand, but he did mention the main cause as well--personnel. In his words there are many unqualified workers in industrial associations and ministries. They are the ones, he said, who are partly responsible for the plan manipulations. Interestingly enough, Vasiliy Mikhaylovich Suslyak suggested, as one of the most serious obstacles in the path of the Shchekino method, executives who very much prefer the easy life, noting that the Shchekino method does not promise an easy life. When I asked: "Then why don't you replace such executives?" Vasiliy Mikhaylovich sighed and answered sadly:

"There just isn't enough time to deal with personnel problems. You should come and see how hard the oblast committee secretary has to work from the early hours of the morning. He has to distribute rail cars, electric power and gas among enterprises subordinated to different departments, settle disputes and discord between them...."

I know for a fact--words to this effect have already been published--that like it or not, our party executives have transformed into super-administrators.

"Whom can I turn to now when some administrative problem must be solved on a rayon-wide basis?" Suslyak continued. "I have to solve it myself, because there is no such cross-departmental authority."

Vasiliy Mikhaylovich and I discussed how many workers could be freed if the enterprises were to participate in a territorial cooperative system. At least in terms of auxiliary production.

"Perhaps we need to create intersector production operations supported by the enterprises on a proportionate basis?" Vasiliy Mikhaylovich thought. "They could manufacture the tools, repair the machine tools and produce the nonstandard equipment.... But we would also need special experimental organizations and centers that could provide recommendations on scientific organization of labor and management."

Yes, the time has long been ripe to resolve this issue. But because it has not yet been resolved, each year the enterprises show a greater interest in creating their own auxiliary operations, so that they need not be dependent upon anyone.

And once this happens, such enterprises need additional manpower, and not the Shchekino method.

"There are, of course, things for which we are to blame," Suslyak confessed. "When we send people out to work in the countryside--just the mechanics alone total 8,000--we do not consider the specific personnel structure of enterprises using the Shchekino method."

Many obstacles rise in the path of the method. And sometimes there is no one to help an enterprise which has nobly accepted the challenge of working economically. What could we do?

"I do have one idea," Nikolay Romanovich Melent'yev uttered at one point, "though of course it's not a new one. The successful conduct of the experiment should be monitored at the same level at which it is approved for introduction. But what do we really find? Our experiment is supported at one level, but at the level of the all-union association, to which we are subordinated, we do not receive this support. This means that the planning for our experimenting enterprise has to be done specially, as a separate item."

I spoke on this subject for a long time with Vera Ivanovna Slepykh and her former colleagues at the combine--Mokin, Yegorov and Lupanov. They all live and work in Moscow now, but they often get together. They honestly admit that the time of the Shchekino experiment was the best in their lives. They spoke with great excitement about those years, and once again I recalled Lev Tolstoy: "If one is to lead an honest life, one must experience anguish, confusion, dispair and error, one must begin and abandon and then begin anew and abandon again, and perpetually struggle and do without. Peace of mind, on the other hand, is nothing more than spiritual poverty."

It is amazing how many people--those I have named here and many others that go unnamed--believed in the method and in its great possibilities for transformation, and devoted their strength, knowledge and enthusiasm to it. What motivated them? The social and moral roots of the pioneer spirit are a special subject.

But there is one more unique facet of the Shchekino experiment. How were the pioneers able to complete the highly complex job of creating and introducing the method so competently and flexibly, and with such high organizational maturity? What sort of science of introduction had they worked out for themselves? After all, the system they used to introduce the method is in and of itself a highly valuable achievement, a tool which our numerous enthusiasts and pioneers sometimes seem to lack.

Nonetheless, a time of dissatisfaction came upon our pioneers. They would have wanted the method to work everywhere--not only in industry but also in agriculture, in the services and in management.

"In general," Vera Ivanovna said, "were we to have approached this measure with the interests of the state really in mind, we would have given the collective a possibility for revealing more and more reserves, so that the more important tasks could be completed with fewer people. Lenin himself said that we need to create

model enterprises. Thus we should have turned the Shchekino chemical combine into such an enterprise, so that anyone who looked at it would want to repeat its experience."

Social copying is the best means of disseminating the best experience, but we use it with such extreme rarity. Although we do have a rather large number of enterprises claiming the status of model enterprises--the Volga Motor Vehicle Plant, the Motor Vehicle Plant imeni V. I. Lenin, "Krasnyy Proletariy," the Minsk Tractor Plant, the Kaluga Turbine Plant, the Ternopol' Sewing Factory and the "Zyryanovskaya" Mine. Do these enterprises need any sort of special conditions? No, not at all. All they need are the normal conditions in which they are guaranteed to receive everything they honestly earn.

This has brought us to another difficult subject: The Shchekino chemical combine tied its fate to Tolstoy's Yasnaya Polyana, located next door, in a most dramatic way. Once long ago, before the famous experiment was started, the combine's atmospheric discharges did some damage to Tolstoy's farm. So that this would not happen again, the combine was ordered to furnish its production operations with high-capacity waste treatment facilities, and it was prohibited from expanding its output capacities. This itself placed the combine in a difficult position, because the economic well-being of any enterprise depends today directly on increases in production volume. Even when such increases might not be all that expedient. The logic of the Shchekino experiment also demanded an increase in production volume. And all of this had to be done with old equipment, because the combine was prohibited from installing new, high-capacity equipment. And even though it now spends many millions to protect the air and water basins, implements preventive measures and maintains its own laboratory in the village of Yasnaya Polyana, the danger of accidental discharges due to wear of the equipment is not excluded. Some fundamental decisions are needed here.

There were some ideas on how to solve the problem: move the combine, which would essentially mean building it anew in another place, and consequently a city to support it as well; or install, in the same place, ultramodern equipment fully guaranteeing environmental safety. The collective is in favor of the second variant. Working together with a planning institute, the combine drew up the grounds for its proposal and submitted it to various levels of authority, but no decision has yet been reached. Because of this, the combine's future is under question, which is why there is uncertainty in the minds of the workers and why many are thinking about pursuing their careers somewhere else. How could the authority of the method possibly not suffer from this? After all, it is closely dependent upon the authority and well-being of the combine!

But could it be that the time of method has passed, and that recollections of it are of nothing more than purely historical interest?

"The personnel shortage we suffer today is only the beginning. This is why we cannot do without the Shchekino method!"--This was Stanislav Nikolayevich Golubev's opinion.

The method's time has not passed; its time is only just beginning--this is the general position that could be sensed throughout all of the statements of my numerous partners in conversation. And if this is so, then let us arise in its

defense! We must purge the method of all that is false, of all that was grafted onto it without cause, and enrich it with the valuable discoveries of its pioneers. And we must provide the method with real state support. So that its fate would be decided not by narrow, bureaucratic interests, no matter how important they might be, but rather by the entire nation. The new economic mechanism, without which it is now impossible to surmount the obsolete stereotypes of business thought, must be turned on at full power. For the moment, however, the bureaucracy is showing no sense of urgency in this regard. Consequently this activity must be placed under extensive public surveillance.

After my materials on the Shchekino movement were published in a newspaper, I received a letter from the city of Engel's, Saratovskaya Oblast, written by candidate of technical sciences, RSFSR Distinguished Inventor N. Chubikov. One of the things he wrote was this:

"The history of the Shchekino method is extremely instructive. I am sure that many can come up with examples of good decisions and useful initiatives floundering in the indifference of officials reluctant to burden themselves with additional troubles and cares. The government is now introducing strict administrative and legal responsibility for sensible use of labor, material-technical and raw material resources. Effectiveness and thrift are the main strategy of business management.

"But are creative potential and innovative activity any less important a state resource than manpower, equipment and raw materials? I would think that the answer is obvious. A person may be held criminally responsible for using people, machinery and resources incompetently. The harm done by the passiveness of such people is measured in more than economic losses. The moral harm done is especially great: Inertia eats away at the desire for creative labor in behalf of all society."

This passionate letter was followed by a response from Deputy Minister for Mineral Fertilizer Production V. K. Borodin, who eagerly admitted to all of the shortcomings in the use of the Shchekino method, but when it came to the position in which the chemical combine has found itself, he gave the following interpretation:

"However, the 'Azot' Production Association, the flagship of the progressive Shchekino venture, which increased its output by 3.1 times and raised labor productivity by 4.1 times in the years of its work according to the new method, found itself in a difficult position at the beginning of the 11th Five-Year Plan. The fact is that the worn and outdated equipment and production processes do not permit further growth in the basic technical-economic indicators, which is in turn having a negative effect on the indicators for the collective's economic and social development."

All of that is true, but there is one question that still troubles me: Who is to blame? Not a word is said about this in the letter. The ministry and the USSR State Committee for Labor and Social Problems have yet to rise above particular facts and take notice of the main thing--the Shchekino stimulus is on the skids....

"So what do you say, should the first swallow take wing or not?" I asked Nikolay Romanovich Melent'yev, recalling to him Tolstoy's words.

"Of course it should!" Nikolay Romanovich answered confidently. "After all, every swallow brings us closer to spring. I have no doubt today that the Shchekino method is the right way to go. And even the disasters that the combine has endured are useful experience, useful lessons as well! Had our first swallow not taken wing, we would still be where we were back in '67. We'd be 14 years behind. Need I say more?"

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CHANGES IN SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF LABOR FORCE

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/Article by N. Moskovchenko, candidate of economic sciences: "Trends in the Changing of the Socio-Economic Structure of Society at the Current Stage"/

/Text/ It was emphasized at the 26th CPSU Congress that under mature socialism there is a growing link between economic progress on the one hand and socio-political and spiritual progress of society on the other hand. This situation, which reflects the development of socialism on its own foundation, has general methodological significance for the analysis and evaluation of shifts in the socio-economic structure of society and for the forecasting of changes. Comrade L.I. Brezhnev said in his Central Committee report to the party at the 26th CPSU Congress: "In the seventies all classes and social groups in Soviet society continued to move closer together. This is an objective but by no means uncontrolled process....In evaluating the experience of our society's development in recent decades, ... it can be assumed that the formation of a classless social structure will take place mainly and primarily within the historical framework of mature socialism."[1]

This conclusion, which is of enormous importance, was reached on the basis of the results of our society's socio-economic development under conditions of mature socialism, and it reflects the consistent course aimed at the achievement of the goal stated in the program of the Communist Party and the Soviet state--the elimination of the foundations for the existence of classes.

Economic Foundations for the Unity of the People

The economy of mature socialism, which acts as a single national economic complex, constitutes the foundation of the growing moral-political unity of the new historical community--the Soviet people--as well as the basis for the process by which all classes and social groups in Soviet society are coming together. The formation of this complex means primarily the creation of a branched network of material and technical links between the major spheres for the application of public labor, the sectors and enterprises; the network develops according to plan and is managed from a single economic center. The formation of this complex also means the intensification of specialization and cooperation among production units. In a political-economic regard, it is important to emphasize

the strengthening of links between reproductive processes in individual units of the economy and the reproduction of the entire public product. In itself the objective development of the economy of mature socialism unavoidably leads to the strengthening of the unity of the entire national economic whole. This manifests itself in the strengthening of the material foundation of the interaction of the two basic spheres for the application of public labor--industry and agriculture--in the strengthening of the exchange between them.

There is graphic evidence of this in the growth of industrial production delivered to agriculture, on the one hand, and the growth of state purchases of agricultural production intended to satisfy the needs of workers and for industrial processing, on the other hand. For example, in 1980 agriculture obtained from our industry 347,600 tractors, in contrast with 239,500 in 1965. For trucks, including specialized trucks and chassis the figures were respectively 268,000 and 94,300; for grain-harvesting combines they were 117,500 and 79,400, for mineral fertilizer (converted to standard units) 81,933,000 and 26,906,000 tons. USSR agricultural consumption of electrical power increased between 1965 and 1980 from 21.099 billion to 110 billion kilowatt hours. During this same period state purchases of grain grew from 36.3 million to 69.4 million tons; for cattle and poultry (live weight) they grew from 9.3 million to 15.9 million tons, and for eggs they grew from 10.5 billion to 43.1 billion.

The strengthening of the links between industry and agriculture finds expression in a qualitatively new phenomenon--the establishment of the country's agro-industrial complex, which brings together the actual agriculture which serves a given branch of industry, the system of purchasing, storing, processing, transporting and trading agricultural products. The functioning of a single agro-industrial complex of the nation embodies the new stage in the collectivization of public labor, the economic foundation for bringing together the nature and conditions of labor in industry and agriculture.

The development of transportation plays an important role in strengthening the material base for the unification of industry and agriculture. Not only does it ensure that equipment, fertilizer and building materials, etc. can be devivered to agriculture, it also improves the supply of goods (specifically consumer goods) to the rural population, contributes to the development of medical and household services in the village, brings urban culture to the village and thereby creates better conditions for rational formation of stable labor collectives in kolkhoz's and sovkhoz's, while eliminating unjustified migration of rural residents to the city. In the 11th Five-Year Plan the process of developing the production and socio-cultural infrastructure of the village, along with the further growth of agricultural production, is acquiring ever greater scale. The "Basic Trends in the Economic and Social Development of the USSR for 1981-1985 and for the Period Up to 1990" calls for a significant increase in the network of motor vehicle roads with hard surfaces, including those within farm units. The significance of this directive becomes especially clear if one takes into account the fact that, as experience testifies, the total losses of kolkhoz's and sovkhoz's from the poor state of roads is equal and sometimes even exceeds expenditures for repairs and for new transport construction.

The functioning of a unified national economic complex as the material basis for the unity of society is manifested in the growing proportionality among the structural elements of the complex, in the coordination of development of the spheres, branches and primary production units--the enterprises (production associations). This contributes to the further intensification of production concentration, to the specialization and cooperation of production and the development of integrated processes. This kind of development is revealed in the increasing scale of the primary units of the national economy, in the formation of production, and scientific-production units in industry and in other sectors of the national economy, and in the establishment of inter-farm enterprises and associations in agriculture. The objectively determined strengthening of these processes entails important socio-economic consequences. For example, the establishment of inter-farm organizations and associations, which include enterprises frequently representing various forms of socialist public ownership of the means of production signifies a new stage along the path by which they are gradually coming together; it also means the formation of a single communist form of ownership. In a correspondingly consistent manner the economic bases for eliminating differences between the working class and the kolkhoz peasantry, between the two forms of socialist property, as well as the still substantial differences which exist between the city and the country, continue to grow stronger.

In this regard a particular role, as has been mentioned, is played by the consolidation of the material-technical base of agriculture, by the process of shifting it to an industrial footing and by the formation of an agro-industrial complex as an organic element of a unified national economic complex of the country.

The development of agro-industrial integration introduces fundamental changes into the socio-economic structure of our society, and into the ratio between the two forms of socialist ownership of the means of production. Increases in state capital investments in agriculture play an important role in this process. In the last 25 years (1966-1980) 383 billion rubles have been invested in agriculture, and this sum amounted to 78 percent of the capital investment in this sector made during all the years of Soviet authority. The 11th Five-Year Plan calls for directing 190 billion rubles of capital investment (or 27 percent of the total for the entire national economy) to agriculture. The broad use of state resources for the development of agriculture, including, of course, kolkhoz production, provides an important foundation for creating the conditions to overcome its cooperative nature in the not-so-distant future: this will take place in the course of the future development of those production relations and of all social relations characteristic of socialism.

The establishment of inter-farm organizations and associations expands the cooperative framework of farms both within the cooperative sector, when the participants are kolkhoz's, as well as along the lines of cooperation among units which belong to the two sectors of public production. This takes place when the participants in inter-farm organizations are kolkhoz's and sovkhoz's or kolkhoz's and state enterprises engaged primarily in the processing of agricultural products. In this way the kolkhoz-cooperative and state enterprises are becoming ever more closely interacting partners in economic relations.

On the basis of the development of the material-technical foundation of agriculture, as well as the strengthening of economic relations among enterprises which represent two forms of socialist ownership, the conditions, organization and system of labor in the kolkhoz's and sovkhoz's are coming closer together, as are the forms, methods and level of payment for the labor. At the present time the real incomes of kolkhoz members have come right up to the incomes of blue- and white-collar workers in the national economy. In 1980 the real incomes of kolkhoz members already amounted to 89 percent of the incomes of blue- and white-collar workers (calculated on a per capita average). For comparison: in 1967 the corresponding percentage was only 75. The average monthly wage payment for kolkhoz members in the public economy of kolkhoz's in 1980 was 116 rubles, while the average monthly wage of the sovkhoz worker was 149.7 rubles.

Thus the development of economic sectors within the unified national economic complex is characterized by a strengthening not only of production unification but also of the social unification of the various forms of farming, and an evening out of the position of all workers in the process of labor and in material and spiritual consumption.

The development of the processes of specialization and cooperation in industry and other branches of the national economy also lead to important social consequences. As a result of the increasing scale of production, enterprises and associations have an opportunity to form incentive funds of significant proportions and to implement large-scale measures to improve the living conditions of their employees: to carry out large-scale housing construction, to build and maintain children's institutions, to acquire modern medical equipment for polyclinics, to own recreation areas and sports facilities or supplementary holdings, etc. The close link between collective labor and collective consumption is here revealed; important incentives are being created to interest the worker in the results of common labor, the form of which is the labor of the socialist production collective.

No less important is another social aspect: the stronger primary units of the national economy have better conditions for creating a system to train personnel in the necessary trades and for ensuring the profession growth of every worker in accordance with the requirements of the scientific organization of labor, the capabilities and labor needs of every member of the collective. It is no accident that the Volga Motor Vehicle Plant, one of the giants of the industry, became an intiator of a system which contributes to the stabilization of the labor collective and to the minimalization of personnel turnover.

The intensifying material-technical unity of the national economy and of its spheres and branches as a result of the development of the processes of specialization, cooperation and concentration leads to the further collectivization of labor. An important role in this process is played by the process of introducing into production the achievements of scientific and technical progress, especially in the area of the comprehensive mechanization and automation of production. The process of the further collectivization of labor is taking place as a result of the increasing scale of the basic units of the national economy as well as of the growing production and economic inter-relations among them.

The production application of uniform machinery and equipment requires the workers who service them to have approximately the same level of general and specialized training, to be able to master new equipment and production technology quickly. As a result of these circumstances the national economy has a smaller and smaller number of people employed in narrowly specialized labor and a growing number of people with "open" trades. A specific example of this can be seen in the growth in the number of machine operators in agriculture; in 1980 they amounted to 19.6 percent of the total number of rural workers. At the same time as the total number of people employed in our agriculture fell by 11 percent during the years 1965-1980, the number of machine operators in agricultural enterprises increased by 45 percent during that same period. Today's rural machine operator is, as a rule, a worker who is able to drive an automobile and a tractor, as well as a combine and other forms of agricultural equipment. As a result, the level of workers' skills is increasing; in addition, manual labor is being replaced by mechanized labor and the labor itself involves more, leading to an an ever greater increase in the creative nature of the work. Further development and strengthening of a unified national economic complex in the country requires improvement in the distribution of production forces; it also requires specialization and balanced development of the economies of the union republics and economic rayons.

The accelerated growth in the economic potential of the Eastern regions and the implementation of major projects to develop their natural wealth, as well as to develop fuel-energy and raw material bases, entails major, progressive socio-economic consequences. The problem of how to supply developing regions with personnel is of particular significance. Its urgency is explained primarily by the fact that rayons in Siberia and the Far East occupy 57 percent of our nation's territory but have only 10 percent of the population. Attracting personnel to the developing rayons requires the implementation of a broad complex of socio-economic measures to create there living conditions which are at the very least equal to those in other rayons of the country; moreover, consideration must be given to the more severe living conditions in the rayons of the North and East as a result of climatic factors, sparse population, distance from the traditional centers of the country's economy and culture and from vacation areas to which a large portion of the population is attracted. In order to create the necessary set of conditions for residents of the regions of new economic development, plans call for the development of a construction base, residential and public service construction, agriculture and improvement of consumer goods provisioning for the population. The implementation of these measures will help to bring together the level, conditions and style of life experienced by the population throughout our country and to eliminate social differences which exist in different areas.

At the same time there arises the question of the need to fully utilize the population of working age in the regions which have a surplus, the republics of central Asia, for example. Here the task is to train skilled personnel from among the local population, especially the young people. Only on this basis will it be possible to have further development of industrialization in the economies of the republics, as well as growth in the number and skill mix of the working class. The implemention of this policy, the significance and essence of which were profoundly revealed by the 26th CPSU Congress, will

become a major step on the path of the further consolidation of the fraternal friendship among the peoples of our country, the multifaceted and harmonious flowering of the socialist nationalities within their united Soviet family.

In this way the economic processes, which are characteristic of developed socialist society, create a firm and ever broader foundation for the further social progress of our society and for the process of bringing it to a social structure characteristic of the higher phase of communism.

Class Shifts in the Structure of Socialist Society

The working class was and remains the leading force of social progress. Its role in the life of our society is growing steadily. In 1980 blue-collar workers amounted to 60.5 percent of the total population of the country. In this way the working class now embodies an obvious majority of the laboring people. There has also been a qualitative change in the cast of mind of today's working class. It is characterized by ideological-political maturity, a high level of general and specialized education and vocational training. At the present time three-quarters of all blue-collars workers have higher or secondary (complete or incomplete) education. The growth in the general educational level of the working class is dictated not only by the goals of multifaceted development of each person in socialist society, it is also directly determined by the requirements of modern production; it is an essential condition for increasing production effectiveness and for opportunities to introduce the achievements of the scientific and technical revolution. For this reason it can be said that the need for universal secondary education is related to social and production considerations at the present time, and both these aspects are related in the closest possible manner under conditions of mature socialism. The system of vocational-technical training for young people plays an important role in the preparation of skilled blue-collar personnel. The high material-technical level of present-day production gives rise to the circumstance that blue-collar workers who were trained directly on the work site or in short courses, frequently are not able to effectively master new equipment and ensure that it operates in a highly productive manner. These are achieved through the training of young workers in vocational-technical institutions, where young men and women receive general secondary education in addition to vocational training.

Evidence of the growth of the ideological-political maturity and level of social activity of the working class can be seen in its broader participation in the socio-economic and political life of the country. Workers constitute a high percentage of those who make up the higher and local organs of authority. Worker participation in the management of today's production is expanding through the system of ongoing production conferences at enterprises; an ever greater number of workers are to be found in the party, trade union and Komsomol committees.

The establishment of the brigade forms of organization and labor payment plays an important role in increasing the level of social activity on the part of the working class. These forms contribute to the further development of collectivist principles, which are inherent in societal relations under socialism.

Questions such as how to evaluate the actual labor contribution of every member of the brigades and how to provide him with moral and material incentives are solved here by the collective; this contributes to understanding of social obligations, responsibility to the collective and the development of socialist competition to achieve high end results.

Changes in the life of the kolkhoz peasantry and of all those who work in rural areas are another consequence of the development of the material-technical base of our society and of the social changes which are taking place within it. At the present time the kolkhoz peasantry and craftsmen who work in cooperatives amount to 13.8 percent of the total population. Profound changes have taken place in the make-up of today's peasantry. These changes have been expressed to a large degree in the growth of the general educational level of the peasantry. At present people with secondary (complete or incomplete) or higher education constitute 60 percent of kolkhoz members. In terms of general education level, the kolkhoz peasantry is coming close to the working class. The data cited above on the number of machine operators provide evidence that the nature and conditions of agricultural work are approaching those of the working class as a result of the industrialization of agriculture.

In addition to changes in the conditions, organization and payment of labor for the kolkhoz peasantry, changes are also taking place in the total way of life for rural workers. This process is facilitated by the broad development of rural construction of housing and amenities, as well as development of medical and educational systems. For example, during th 9th and 10th five-year plans alone, the kolkhoz's, kolkhoz members and the rural intelligentsia built residential buildings with a total (usable) space of 130.7 million square meters, which amounted to more than 12 percent of the new housing opened in the nation. During this same period collectives were responsible for building 7,804 general education schools with places for 2,274,000 pupils, preschool establishments with places for 739,000 children and health care institutions with 45,000 beds.

Significant progressive social shifts are exemplified by the increasing similarity in the structure of income and expenditures of families of industrial workers and kolkhoz members. For example, during the years 1970-1980, the proportion of income derived from the kolkhoz and wages of the family members increased from 48.4 to 53.5 percent, while income from farming the personal plot fell from 31.9 to 25.3 percent. In 1980 the families of a worker and kolkhoz member spent 23.3 and 23.2 percent of total income respectively on textiles, clothing, footwear, furniture and household items; this is evidence of the expanded circle of requirements experienced by the rural population, and the increasing similarity of living conditions for workers and kolkhoz members, for the urban and rural population. At the same time differences still exist in the use of the public consumption funds: in the total income of the worker's family, pensions, grants, stipends and other payments and benefits from the public consumption funds amounted to 23.3 percent in 1980, while they amounted to 19.5 percent of the income of the kolkhoz member's family.[2] The differences here are not so great; nonetheless, they must be taken into account when developing further measures aimed at increasing the people's welfare. The process of equalizing the living standard (given the total increase in living standards) of urban and rural workers also manifests itself in the supply level of products to

satisfy spiritual needs. For example, in 1970 the rural population had five-sevenths as many radios and record players as the urban population and approximately one-half as many television sets (calculated per 100 families), while by 1980 the gap had been reduced to five-sixths and ten-elevenths respectively.[3]

All these favorable processes, however, still do not mean that the substantial differences between the city and the country have been eliminated, especially in the sphere of culture and daily life, and the CPSU takes this situation into account fully. At the 26th party congress it was noted that "much effort, time and money are still required to improve the cultural and daily living conditions of life in the countryside, to overcome the substantial differences between the city and the village."[4] A significant portion of these efforts is being carried out during the course of the fulfillment of the plan for the economic and social development of the USSR in the 11th five-year plan.

In addition to the two friendly classes, the working class and the peasantry, the stratum of the intelligentsia exists in our country and plays a large and positive role in communist construction. At present the Soviet intelligentsia, like the working class and the peasantry, as well as the entire society of mature socialism, is developing on the natural foundation of socialism, which has given rise to it, shaped its attitudes and is constantly strengthening it. Virtually all of the Soviet intelligentsia has been molded by socialist society, educated in the spirit of its ideals and values and is linked by indissoluble bonds with the working class and the peasantry; it has arisen largely from these classes.

The steady growth in the number of intelligentsia members is one of the trends in our society's social development which can be traced throughout our history. According to statistical data from 1939, our country had a total of about 13 million people who were engaged primarily in mental labor, while in 1980 the figure was already more than 40 million. These major changes have been objectively determined by the establishment and development of the material-technical base of production characteristic of socialism, and they cannot fail to grow stronger under today's conditions, which are characterized by a combination of the advantages of our social system with the achievements of the scientific-technical revolution. In 1959 white-collar workers (including members of their families) accounted for 18.1 percent of the total population of the country; in 1970 they accounted for 22.1 percent and in 1981 the figure was 25.7 percent. During this period the number of white-collar workers increased at a rate approximately double that for blue-collar workers, and with regard to the kolkhoz peasantry, it is well known that its numbers are decreasing in a natural manner. With social group dynamics of this kind the essence of the advancing development of socialism shows itself: the working class remains the predominant force of society both quantitatively and qualitatively, while the ranks of the intelligentsia, formed by the working class and the kolkhoz peasantry grow rapidly. Under these conditions rapid growth of this kind not only cannot weaken the positions of the two friendly classes of our society, on the contrary, it strengthens them, putting at the service of these classes (and, of course, the service of the intelligentisa itself) the achievements of modern science, the spheres of education, health care, culture and management.

The indissoluble unity of the intelligentsia with the working class and the peasantry in our society results not only from the community of goals, interests and origins. The unity of the way of life experienced by all the social groups in a mature socialist society is felt with ever greater clarity. Those same processes which bring together in this regard the working class and peasantry (discussed above) are also characteristic of the relations which these classes have with the intelligentisa. Mention should be made first of all of a specific area of the socialist way of life such as the labor sphere.

Engaging in occupations related to mental labor was and remains the distinguishing feature of the intelligentsia. Under today's conditions, however, which combine the advantages of socialism with the achievements of the scientific-technical revolution, it is usual for mental labor to be an organic part of the daily activities of blue-collar workers, and in many cases the same applies to peasants. Moreover, in terms of the attitude of workers and peasants, there is every reason to talk about the predominance and sometimes even the essentially complete supremacy of labor calling for mental functioning. The employee who monitors the operations of the most varied machinery complexes, which are run under a system of automation (automated line in machine building or another sector of industry, equipment in a modern chemical enterprises or electric power plant, etc.), the driver of modern means of transport and the representatives of certain other occupations are engaged in labor which is, in fact, mainly mental, while the proportion of physical effort in their labor process does not exceed or only barely exceeds the proportion characteristic of the labor performed by employees belonging to the intelligentsia. On the basis of this central, definite line an intensive process is taking place which brings together the intelligentsia with both classes in our society, and primarily with the working class.

The growing level of education possessed by blue-collar workers and kolkhoz members, which was discussed above, contributes to the increasing elimination of the distinguishing features of the intelligentsia with regard to the creative nature of their labor. Strictly speaking, under socialism, when every worker is an equal master of public production, the very division of labor into "creative and "uncreative" is to a very definite degree relative in nature. Every person has opportunities for labor creativity. But, it goes without saying, that the creative "content" of specific labor functions cannot be identical, for a scholar and a lathe operator, for example, or for an engineer and a textile worker, etc. The changes which take place in socialist production under conditions of the scientific-technical revolution, in general mean an increase in the creative potential of all labor processes, but the increase in the cultural-technical level of the working people creates the necessary conditions for more effective realization of this potential.

It should be noted that the movement of the intelligentsia toward the two classes in our society in a decisive sphere, the labor sphere, is also taking place by virtu of certain changes in the position of the intelligentsia. A significant number of this stratum's representatives are engaged in more or less standardized types of labor, characterized by the constant rep tition of the same functions. This applies to many white-collar workers in the government apparatus

in financial and credit institutions, in the service sphere, some engineering-technical employees, and personnel in scientific-research institutions, etc. Thus, the conversion of the intelligentsia into a multi-million strong stratum leads to a situation in which the process by which the intelligentsia comes closer to the working class and the peasantry in the nature of its labor functions takes place as if from two sides: from the side of these classes and from the side of the intelligentsia itself. From here, in particular, it follows that future developments in this process cannot be linked only with the strengthening of mental labor functions among workers and peasants; it is also essential to increase the intelligentsia's opportunities for creativity, freeing the labor of many of its representatives from routine, operational functions. The realization of this process means the future movement of social groups in our society toward each other must be carried out on a higher and higher foundation of labor creativity.

This process of coming together, while it has labor functions as its foundation, also penetrates into other sphere ecompassing in this way all aspects of our way of life. Manifestations of this process in the sphere of distribution can be pointed out in particular. In 1940 the ratio of wages for blue-collar, white-collar and engineering-technical employees in USSR industry was 1:1.1:2.12; in 1970 the ratio was 1:0.85:1.36, and in 1980 it was 1:0.78:1.14. This process of income equalization is taking place both between and within sectors. It reflects changes in the content of labor, the party's policy of generally increasing the welfare of the entire people and the high degree to which the national economy is supplied with specialists.

The increasingly similar way of life experienced by all the social groups in our society is also revealed in aspects noted in many sociological studies: the evening out of the alignment of various needs and the ways in which they are satisfied, the number of children in families, in the distribution of free time, etc. There is evidence of the enormous success of this process to be found in the position advanced by the 26th CPSU Congress concerning the opportunity to confirm the classless structure of our society reached while we are still in the stage of developed socialism, i.e., before the building of complete communism is finished. The practical implementation of this position consists primarily in the further advancement of socialist production on the basis of intensification, growing effectiveness and the maximum possible improvement in the quality of work. A significant condition of this advancement is the further improvement in the economic mechanism, in which the ever greater participation by working people in management plays an extremely important role. The 26th CPSU Congress set the goal of "developing the initiative and creative activity of working people in the management of the economy."[5] The achievement of this task by all working people, the equal participation in this matter of all social groups strengthens to an enormous degree the process of forming the classless structure of our society and foreordains the trends in the changing of its socio-economic structure on the way to the higher phase of communism.

FOOTNOTES

1. "Materialy XXVI s'yezda KPSS" [Materials of the 26th CPSU Congress], Moscow, pp 52-53.

2. See "Narodnoye khozyaystvo SSSR v 1980" [The National Economy of the USSR in 1980], Moscow, pp 384-385.

3. See "Narodnoye khozyaystvo SSSR v 1980" [The National Economy of the USSR in 1980], Moscow, pp 384-385.

4. "Materialy XXVI s'yezda KPSS" [Materials of the 26th CPSU Congress], p 53.

5. "Materialy XXVI s'yezda KPSS" [Materials of the 26th CPSU Congress], p 202.

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BRIGADE FORM OF LABOR ORGANIZATION DISCUSSED

Brigade Performance Calculated

Moscow PLANOVOYE KHOZYAYSTVO in Russian No 4, Apr 82 pp 94-99

[Article by V. Fil'yev, chief, Division of Labor Organization and Standardization, Ministry of Mineral Fertilizer Production: "Experience in Stimulating the Brigade Form of Labor"]

[Text] The brigade form of labor organization is acquiring increasingly greater significance to solving economic and social problems at the present stage of the national economy's development. According to Decree No 695 "On Improving Planning and Strengthening the Influence of the Economic Mechanism on Increasing Production Efficiency and Work Quality," adopted by the CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers on 12 July 1979, this is to become the main form of labor organization in the 11th Five-Year Plan. This task is also important because ensuring a strict dependence between the results of production activity and the measure of compensation which must be applied primarily to the primary labor collectives--the production brigades--is becoming one of the main economic prerequisites of raising the effectiveness of live labor.

Many enterprises of different sectors in the national economy, including those of mineral fertilizer production industry, have accumulated a significant amount of experience in introducing the brigade form of labor organization and payment. An analysis of the work of enterprises, and primarily of the Shchekino "Azot" Production Association imeni 50-Letiye SSSR and the VAZ [Volga Motor Vehicle Plant], would show that wherever the decision to introduce the brigade form of labor organization and payment of labor on the basis of end results is based to a decisive degree on presence of a production process in which the entire collective participates, on presence of a common work area and front, on presence of a single production quota for the entire collective, on consideration of its attainment and on presence of a well conceived system of material stimulation, the effectiveness of labor is significantly higher.

From these positions, in our point of view, the experience of the Ionava "Azot" Production Association imeni XXV s"yezd KPSS is of certain methodological and practical interest in relation to creating integrated production brigades. This enterprise rejected the zonal-machine unit method, which did not permit sensible use of manpower since workers were assigned to just one work station. Instead, it introduced an integrated production method for servicing the chemical production processes.

An integrated production brigade is organized out of workers representing different occupations in order to perform technologically different but interrelated jobs embracing the entire production process, or an integral part of it. The following quotas are set in the brigade's monthly plan: production volume in tons; reduction of labor-intensiveness in norm-hours; growth in job quality (level of technological discipline, decreases in the percent violation of production norms, product quality); economization of raw materials, intermediate products and energy resources; hourly machine unit productivity quota. The quotas for the following month are announced not later than 5 days before the end of the current month, and they are discussed at a production meeting or by a brigade council. The brigade collective adopts its socialist pledge.

Appropriate additional charges have been introduced into the association in order to increase the effectiveness with which manpower is used (assimilation of associated occupations, expansion of the zones of service, qualification upgrading). The sizes of the additional charges for surpassing the machine, machine unit and apparatus servicing norms are calculated as the product of the brigade's total wages as determined from the monthly wage scale, the percentage by which the servicing norms are surpassed and a coefficient considering the dependence of the additional charges on the degree to which the output capacities of the equipment are utilized. The percentage by which the servicing norms are surpassed, $K_{s.n.}$, is determined from the formula:

$$K_{s.n.} = \frac{T_p}{T_a} 100-100, \qquad (1)$$

where T_p--the brigade's planned time (labor) expenditures for the month, hr; T_a--the brigade's actual time (labor) expenditures for the month, hr.

The coefficients of the dependence of charges additional to the wage scale on the utilization of output capacities are shown below.

Utilization of Equipment Output Capacities in Relation to Approved Annual Plan, %	Coefficient of Dependence of Charges Additional to Wage Scale for Each Percentage Point the Equipment Servicing Norms are Exceeded
Up to 64	0.4
65-74	0.5
75-79	0.6
80-94	0.7
Over 95	0.8

Charges in addition to the wage scale are distributed among the brigade members in proportion to their wages as determined by the wage scale for the given month, corrected by a coefficient accounting for associated occupations and KTU [not further identified]. If a worker is not trained in associated occupations, the coefficient

used to calculate his wages is set at one ($K = 1$). This coefficient is increased by 0.1 for the first and for each subsequent associated occupation assimilated. The coefficient is set at 1.5 for the brigade leader. Moreover, on petition of the brigade (brigade council), the size of the increment may be increased for a worker who has assimilated more than three associated occupations. Charges additional to the wage scale are paid from the wage fund, and they are accounted for within the fund. They must not exceed 50 percent of the worker's wages as determined from the monthly wage scale.

The association also foresees an additional payment for the intensity with which equipment is used, with the main emphasis being laid on achieving the equipment's required hourly productivity.* The actual hourly productivity achieved (H_p) is calculated using the formula

$$H_p = \sum \frac{V_i - V_{si}}{T_{ai} - T_{mi} - T_{si}}, \qquad (2)$$

where V_i--volume of products produced in the month by the i-th production line assigned to the brigade, tons; V_{si}--production volume on days when the senior dispatcher gave instructions to reduce the work load owing to a shortage of steam, water, raw materials or electric power on the i-th production line, tons; T_{ai}--time equipment of the i-th production line actually worked, hr; T_{mi}--idle time due to mishaps on the i-th production line, hr.

Additional charges are also applied to the wage fund for the intensity of equipment use, on the mandatory condition that the monthly plan is fulfilled. The percentage of this additional charge is determined from the following scale:

Percent Fulfillment of Hourly Production Quotas	Additional Payment, Percent of Wage Scale
71-85	5
86-90	10
91-99	15
100 and higher	20

It is important to note that if at the time of a shift change a brigade surrenders a production line working at lower hourly productivity (an average of 80 percent or less), the additional payment made to the brigade for this day is decreased by 50 percent; in cases where the machine unit (production line) is stopped, the additional payment is forfeited in full, while the additional payment enjoyed by the brigade assuming the next shift is raised correspondingly as compensation for the loss caused by the previous shift. It is considered in this case that the total

*Required hourly productivity is defined as the shift production plan divided by the number of hours worked by the shift, minus the time for repairs made as part of the planned preventive repair (PPR) system.

amount by which the additional payment to the brigade assuming the next shift is increased is subtracted from the amount charged extra to the brigade responsible for the loss, and it is only after this that the additional payment is distributed among the brigade's members in the established order. If a mishap was responsible for the interruption and the brigade was unable to get the production line working again, no further reductions are made in the additional charges for intensive equipment use in subsequent shifts. When the hourly productivity decreases or a machine unit is stopped in response to instructions from the association's senior dispatcher, the additional wages are not decreased.

Let us illustrate the mechanism of action of the stimulation system adopted by the Ionava "Azot" Production Association using the example of one of the brigades working in the carbamide-formaldehyde resin shop. Table 1 shows the data used to calculate the planned hourly equipment productivity on the basis of monthly quotas.

Table 1

Subdivision	No. of Working Days Per Month	Shift Duration, hr	No. of Machine Units	No. of Machine Unit Hours Per Month	PPR Time, hr	Planned Equipment Work Time, hr	Monthly Brigade and Shop Production Plan, Tons
Brigade "A"	22	8	3	528	126	402	1,232
Brigade "B"	23	8	3	552	126	426	1,305
Brigade "C"	22	8	3	528	134	304	1,207
Brigade "D"	23	8	3	552	142	410	1,256
Total for the shop						1,632	5,000

The planned hourly equipment productivity for the shop was 5,000/1,632 = 3.0637.

Let us examine the work of brigade A in somewhat greater detail. The brigade's actual output was 1,258 tons. In this case the brigade worked 28 machine unit-hours at a lower load on orders from the senior dispatcher due to a shortage of steam; during this time it produced 63 tons. Consequently during the time that the equipment was working at full capacity, the brigade worked 402-28 = 374 hr and it produced 1,258-63 = 1,195 tons. The hourly productivity of the machine unit was, for this brigade, 1,195/374 = 3.1952 tons. The percentage of planned hourly productivity actually reached was

$$\frac{3.1952}{3.0637} 100 = 104.32\%.$$

Thus in accordance with the statute the additional charge for reaching 100 percent or more of the planned hourly productivity is 20 percent of the wage scale.

Table 2 shows the data used to determine the planned labor intensity and the quota for its reduction.

Table 2

Subdivision	No. of Scheduled Work Days	Shift Duration, hr	Standard No. of Workers in Brigade, Persons	Planned Time Reserve, Man-Hours	Planned Production Volume for Month, Tons	Planned Labor Intensity, Norm-Hours	Labor Intensity Reduction Quota, %
Brigade "A"	22	8	18	3,168	1,232	2.5714	3
Brigade "B"	23	8	18	3,312	1,305	2.5379	3
Brigade "C"	22	8	18	3,168	1,207	2.6247	3
Brigade "D"	23	8	18	3,312	1,256	2.6359	3

Brigade A had the least number of workers, and according to the table it worked 2,641 hours. The actual labor intensity was

$$\frac{2,641}{1,195} = 2.2100 \text{ hr/ton},$$

and the quota for reducing it was satisfied to (2.5714/2.2160)100-100 = 16.35 percent. The brigade exceeded the machine unit servicing norm by (3.168/2.641)100-100 = 19.95 percent, and in accordance with the statute it will receive payment additional to the monthly wage scale. Inasmuch as the coefficient for the dependence of additional charges for exceeding the servicing norm is 0.8 (because the intensity of equipment use is more than 100 percent), the final size of the additional charge is 15.96 percent. And finally, a few words about upgrading work quality: According to data from the technical control division, the brigade decreased the number of violations of production standards by 7.95 percent, and according to the existing bonus payment statute, the bonus paid to its members would reach 10 percent.

Without a doubt the integrated approach to organizing the brigade, choice of the correct organizational and economic methods and a program to explain the system to the collective had a positive effect on the work of the production association as a whole. During the 10th Five-Year Plan the quantity of integrated brigades increased by 35 percent, and the average equipment load increased to 82 percent. The association worked stably, and it fulfilled its plan.

Also deserving of serious attention is the work experience of the Rovno "Azot" Production Association imeni 50-Letiye SSSR in introducing an integrated system for managing the labor collectives, and primarily for organizing their work. The order of formation and the structure of production brigades and sections providing collective services to work zones and the organizational and khozraschet relationships of these brigades were determined.

All laborers, engineers, technicians and white collar workers are assigned to collective production equipment service zones (embracing a single production process or associated with an administrative function of a single kind). For example four

shifts of the principal workers are assigned to one collective service zone. Each of the shifts is represented by a brigade, and it is given a general khozraschet quota. Engineers and technicians in the four shifts are also assigned to a collective service zone. In turn, repairman brigades performing allied functions are assigned to a collective service zone for the care of machines and repair of the basic production equipment. Such organizational coordination has also been achieved in other subdivisions of the association.

Each collective service zone is characterized by its own khozraschet terms, evaluation indicators and a common bonus fund (bonuses are paid to laborers for fulfilling their production quotas and to engineers, technicians and white collar workers for fulfilling the work plan). The common bonus fund is distributed within a collective service zone among the primary collectives (brigades, shifts, divisions) in a differentiated manner, depending on the results achieved and on fulfillment of socialist pledges associated with fund-forming indicators. Bonuses are distributed to the members of a brigade by its council, in proportion to the actual wages earned, with a consideration for the coefficient of labor participation.

Production quotas and counterpledges are determined on the basis of common fund-forming indicators related to the entire production process: unit production volume given in terms of standard wage; production volume in natural terms (for production brigades); labor productivity in terms of hourly standard wage; a coefficient reflecting work quality and reduction of unit outlays of raw materials, intermediate products and energy resources (for production subdivisions) and the proportion of guaranteed repair jobs (for repair brigades).

The standard quota is the principal document used in the planning and accounting of the work volume and labor productivity of laborers, engineers, technicians and white collar workers of each shift and shop. It is established in relation to the standard wage calculated for the brigade (on the basis of the wage and salary scales), in accordance with the existing personnel roster and in relation to the planned production (job) volume.

Actual quota fulfillment is also accounted for in the standard wage per unit products (jobs) foreseen by the plan. Both losses in the final production volume suffered at the fault of the brigade (division) and surplus production owing to implementation of measures at the collective's initiative are accounted for in relation to each primary collective. Production volume losses (or increases) are reflected in the standard wage, in accordance with the established standards, in relation to each 1,000 rubles of salable product. Moreover records are kept on savings and losses experienced by the association due to the activities of each brigade and division (including unproductive expenditures, fines and other forms of losses).

Such record keeping makes it possible to determine the influence each collective has on the labor productivity of the entire labor collective. The main indicator used to determine extra charges for expanding service zones, for doing extra work and for performing extra administrative functions is growth in labor productivity in comparison with the planned rate, with a consideration for the work quality coefficient. Growth in production volume in natural terms is the principal indicator used to calculate bonuses (for laborer brigades).

The labor productivity indicator (LP) may be expressed by the following formula:

$$LP = \frac{SW \pm \Delta SW}{N - N_f}, \qquad (3)$$

where SW--standardized wage of the primary labor collective, calculated in relation to useful work time devoted to the planned (actual) work volume, rubles; ΔSW--additional standardized wage corresponding either to extra production ($+\Delta P$) or a production shortfall ($-\Delta P$), rubles; N--standard number of workers in the primary labor collective, persons; N_f--actual number of workers freed, persons.

This indicator is determined for collectives of engineers, technicians and white collar workers with a consideration for the plan fulfillment coefficient (K_{pf}):

$$LP = \frac{SW_s \cdot K_{pf} \pm SW_c}{T}, \qquad (4)$$

where SW_s--planned production volume in relation to standard wage for the given structural subdivision, rubles; SW_c--change in production volume depending on the given structural subdivision, rubles; T--time reserve of the given structural subdivision's collective, hours.

The association's material incentive fund is distributed among the subdivisions in amounts established by estimates, and it is used for current payments of bonuses to the collectives, on the condition that they satisfy the bonus payment indicators with a consideration for the results of socialist competition.

The work quality indicator is determined for the collectives of laborer brigades on the basis of a quality certification system. The labor quality certification system is represented by valuational and mobilizational indicators describing the production quality, the level of labor discipline and compliance with the requirements of labor protection, industrial safety and production excellence. Valuational indicators are common to all brigades, while mobilizational indicators are set individually for each brigade with a consideration for the particular features of the production process.

The quality of work done by administrative services is evaluated on the basis of an integrated analysis of their influence upon activity results. It with this purpose that the association has formed a raw data bank using a magnetic carrier (containing about 300 indicators). A computer program uses these data to calculate resultant indicators (for different levels of administration) for about 90 administrative functions. All partial indicators are grouped, in order of their importance, in relation to shop administrative services and administrative divisions with consideration for the proportionate influence the primary collectives have on each work quality coefficient (at each of the administrative levels). The final basic work quality coefficient of each administrative division and service is set individually in the plan, depending on the complexity and quantity of tasks facing the division (administrative service).

Here is one last provision which in our opinion should be of methodological and practical interest. The association has introduced a new order of establishing additional payments to workers in brigades fulfilling a certain work volume with a smaller number of personnel. While in the Shchekino system additional payments are determined over a long period of time--a year and more, in the Rovno system their amount is calculated on a monthly basis.

This permits the conclusion that this system is a mechanism of collective production control based on combination of the interests of each laborer with the interests of the enterprise in questions of raising the effectiveness of production and the quality of the labor. This system significantly raises the role played in production control by inhouse planning, bookkeeping and analysis of economic activities. A system for automated processing of information indicating deviations from the normal course of operations can be used to determine the role played by all structural subdivisions in improving the association's economic activity. No less important is the fact that this makes the entire labor collective directly interested in the work results and offers it a real possibility for making the best decisions. The labor collective also becomes more interested in improving the association's work, to include raising labor productivity and work quality and reducing the number of personnel (freeing certain workers).

This system is now in its third year of operation. Its effectiveness may be judged from the following figures. While in 1979 44 brigades were participating in it, today there are 343 (88.3 percent of all of the workers); in this case the content of their labor has changed significantly. Personnel turnover in the association decreased by 18.5 percent. The phosphoric acid shop (which formerly had chronic difficulties in plan fulfillment) was the first to introduce the brigade method. In 2 years its production volume increased by 12.9 percent and labor productivity grew by 33 percent. The wage fund was reduced by 72,300 rubles due to a reduction in the number of personnel (41 persons), and personnel turnover decreased by 36.5 percent. The Rovno Production Association is now in its second year of generally stable, dependable operation, and all technical-economic indicators are being satisfied.

At the same time there are still many serious shortcomings at many enterprises in the organization of production, labor, administration and wages; purposeful efforts to raise production excellence and improve labor organization are not yet being made. Although labor is being standardized for 80 percent of all of the sector's industrial production personnel, the labor of about 79,000 persons is still not being standardized. Efforts to convert to the brigade form of labor organization and stimulation are still unsatisfactory, and most existing brigades do not yet satisfy all of the requirements imposed on them today. At present 51.9 percent of the workers of the sector's enterprises are in brigades. This might not seem to be such a bad figure, but an analysis of the content of their activity would show that almost half of them are working according to the old practices. Not all brigades are organized to run a complete production process, the economic justifications for the number of workers in brigades are inadequate, and wages are not being paid on the basis of the end result.

The effort to organize production, labor and administration has not been integrated in the sector, owing to which the production and labor productivity growth indicators of similar production operations vary, and the same equipment is serviced by different

numbers of workers. The experience of enterprises that have achieved the best organization of production, labor and administration is being disseminated too slowly. The systemic principle is not being applied adequately to questions of material stimulation of labor.

Presence of these circumstances and shortcomings made it necessary to develop a specific-purpose program in the sector to improve collective forms of labor organization and payment. It was with this purpose that the ministry's Administration for Organization of Labor and Wages prepared a proposal in 1981 to improve collective forms of labor organization and stimulation. This proposal was based on investigation and analysis of the best experience accumulated by enterprises of this sector and other ministries. Specific-purpose 2-week courses were organized for the principal specialists of 13 of the sector's enterprises at the Moscow Advanced Training Institute so that the experience of the VAZ and the Shchekino imeni 50-Letiye SSSR, Rovno, Grodno imeni S. O. Pratytskiy, Severodonetsk imeni Leninskiy Komsomol and Ionava production associations could be studied. These enterprises were designated as the basis for developing, over a period of 1 or 2 years, the method for improving collective forms of wage payment, so that the entire sector could be converted to this system in the next few years. Work is presently underway jointly with the TsNOTKhIM [not further identified] to develop and introduce standard organizational plans for the base enterprises.

The ministry's governing board and the trade union central committee held a joint meeting to examine and approve the system for improving collective forms of organization and wages, and they took steps to ensure broad introduction of this system into the sector's enterprises. The main goal of this system is to achieve the greatest effectiveness in the activity of the enterprise through its intensification--that is, through the development and introduction of a complex of measures creating optimum possibilities for the use of equipment, raw materials, intermediate products and manpower. The system is directed mainly at improving the socioeconomic conditions for development of the personality and of the labor collective as a whole, and it foresees adoption of basic premises for and approaches to improving the organization of production, the planning of labor indicators and material stimulation of growth in the labor productivity of the enterprises.

This system is based on:

Development and universal application of technically grounded labor standards, to be used as planning norms in the establishment of production quotas for each brigade and each worker;

a collective form of labor organization and wages, which presupposes creation of brigades according to the complete production process principle, economic justification of their size, payment of wages on the basis of end results and application of the coefficient of labor participation;

presence of a system of planning and accounting for the production and technical-economic indicators of the brigades (based on the use of common integrated indicators for labor productivity and quality, in natural and financial terms), aimed at achieving effective equipment use;

centralization and specialization of administrative functions with the purpose of making each subdivision responsible for certain types of jobs and tasks and making it fully responsible for the end results of its activities;

development of the creative efforts made by each worker to raise the effectiveness and excellence of production, to strengthen production discipline, and especially labor discipline, and to develop a sense of comradely mutual assistance and collective responsibility within the brigade;

introduction of khozraschet into the brigade with the purpose of increasing the interest of the workers in completing the planned production volume ahead of schedule, decreasing the labor intensity of production, achieving economical use of raw materials, intermediate products, fuel and power, and raising production quality and the rhythmicity of production.

Thus the objective is to introduce a complex of organizational-technical measures (a system of such measures) so as to free 5-10 percent of the personnel of each enterprise for other functions by the end of the 11th Five-Year Plan.

The first steps in reaching the goal of this system--improving collective forms of labor organization and wages--have already been made. Four of the 13 base enterprises were converted to this new system at the beginning of the present year: the Rovno "Azot" Production Association, the Vinnitsa Chemical Plant imeni Ya. M. Sverdlov, the Ufa "Khimprom" Production Association and the Navoi Electrochemical Plant. They have confidently taken their starting positions in the 11th Five-Year Plan, and their sights are set on completing a sizeable program, in terms of both volume and quality (in particular, introduction and assimilation of output capacities and improvement of labor organization and control) with the purpose of achieving the final goal--raising production effectiveness by increasing labor productivity and work quality.

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Brigade Experience, Problems

Moscow EKONOMICHESKAYA GAZETA in Russian No 13, Mar 82 p 5

[Article by A. Kovalev: "The Brigade: Its Formation and Development"]

[Text] In his speech to the 17th USSR Trade Union Congress, L. I. Brezhnev devoted a great deal of attention to development of the brigade form of labor organization and stimulation, and he described the growing role of brigades: "Raising production effectiveness, they are fully in keeping with the party's economic strategy at the present stage."

The editor's office organized a meeting attended by a group of delegates from the trade union congress working as brigade leaders at enterprises and in organizations of different sectors of the national economy. They described their experience and the problems associated with the brigade form of labor organization and stimulation. A report on this meeting is published below.

V. T. Adylov, Turner Brigade Leader, Tashkent Aviation Production Association Imeni V. P. Chkalov:

Sixty-three of our production association's workers are now in brigades of the new type. This has produced good results. Labor productivity increased by an average of 21 percent in comparison with that of laborers not in brigades. The quality of the work increased as well. And in airplane construction, this is the most important criterion.

But improving administration is a creative process, and our experience suggests new solutions that are in keeping with particular features of the work. We, as an example, have a production process referred to as between-operation grinding. It slows us down. When parts are sent to this section, it sometimes takes several days of waiting before the grinding is finished. Consequently the work of all sections and shops must be tied to the end result. We use a very good criterion--the level of completeness. A brigade can count on additional stimulation if this level does not go below 93 percent. When we summarize competition results, we consider why and at whose fault this level had not been reached, and khozraschet economic sanctions are accordingingly imposed.

L. I. Brezhnev made a very important conclusion in his speech to the congress: "...in order that the khozraschet brigade could advance unhindered, we must continue our reorganization of the economic mechanism, improve material-technical supply and fight against formalism in the planning and accounting of labor."

V. K. Khoruzha, Driver Brigade Leader, Ivanovo Motor Vehicle Column No 1412, Hero of Socialist Labor:

There can be no debate here: Brigades not only make the workers more disciplined, but they also force us to think twice about how we can improve production organization. One other thing they do that I would like to make special note of is increase the efficiency of mutual control. In former times we had problems with engines out of tune, resulting in excessive gasoline consumption. Some drivers would continue to operate such engines from one technical inspection to the next. One can imagine how much fuel was wasted as a result. And now, everyone watches to see that the vehicles are in good working order. This produces a direct savings. We save on fuel, and we are able to achieve additional savings by increasing the weight of our truck trains. According to the specifications, a ZIL-130 can carry a load of up to 18 tons. I believe that the designers were overcautious. We hitch one and sometimes two trailers to a truck. The weight of our trains reaches up to 28 tons. This produces a savings not only in gasoline but also manpower.

We provide services to highway construction organizations. According to the existing norm, we should have used 32 trucks to carry all of our cargo last year. But we were able to do the same volume of work with 12 vehicles. But I should note that the credit for this is not ours alone. We sign agreements with the road builders and with the quarry administration. The latter pledges, for example, to elminate the causes of truck idleness during loading and unloading and to keep the approach roads properly maintained.

I think that our work could be improved some more. We can do this by including freight handling mechanism mechanics in each driver brigade. We need to think up ways to modify the trucks so that gravel and sand would not have to be unloaded by hand. This would significantly increase the number of trips that we could make per shift.

G. N. Mulyayev, Carpenter-Concrete Layer Brigade Leader, "Kolymagestroy" Construction Administration:

I have a good brigade. There are 56 men in it. The way labor was organized before, we needed a significantly larger number of workers to get things done. But today, we are able to fulfill the quota with a smaller number of workers. We completed the 3-month plan by the opening of the 17th USSR Trade Union Congress, as we had pledged. We increased the concrete laying volume to 5.93 cubic meters per person per shift. This is over two times more than foreseen by the norm.

I. V. Kosyrev, Senior Turbine Mechanic, Saratovskaya TETs-2:

Now that the subject of power engineers has been broached, let me continue that discussion. Besides G. N. Mulyayev, there are two more of us from this sector--I, an operator, and Vladimir Baritskiy, leader of a finishing work brigade employed by the construction administration of the Rovno Atomic Electric Power Plant. His brigade does the finishing touches before the operators begin their work. I can say this about the collective of the TETs-2: Our work is not bad. Our main goal is to raise the quality of heat supply while concurrently reducing fuel consumption. Our collective has enjoyed certain successes in this regard. We have reduced fuel consumption 9 percent below the norm. And in 7 years we saved a total of 800,000 tons of comparison fuel.

T. M. Korneva, Brigade Leader, Moscow Furniture Factory No 3:

I would like to talk about the role of the brigade leader as a mentor, as a teacher of the young. My brigade contains secondary school graduates and young people who came to work after finishing eighth grade. I believe that the future of these young people depends in many ways on how we welcome them into our working family and how much concern we show for improving their occupational skills and developing a creative attitude toward their work. The rearing of adolescents must not end in school. This is a continuous process. What plays the decisive role? I think, first of all, objectivity in assessing work and behavior. I am able to inspire love in the occupation they selected.

V. K. Khoruzha:

I agree with Tat'yana Mikhaylovna. The brigade's educational role is very great. We in our collective attach as much significance to it as to fulfillment of planned quotas. And we are proud that one of our drivers, Yuriy Shishov, was the recipient of the Lenin Komsomol Prize.

V. I. Kotova, Assembler Brigade Leader, Leningrad "Svetlana" Production Association:

Education makes our brigade strong as well. There are 15 people in our collective. We assemble transistors. The work is important. After all, our products are the foundation of highly complex instruments installed in the most progressive equipment of many machine building sectors. And only by nurturing a high sense of responsibility can we complete our work successfully.

The evaluation made by L. I. Brezhnev can be applied to many brigades in our association: "A well organized, effectively and, I would say, wisely working brigade is a true school for development of the administrative habits of the workers, and an experimental laboratory for all creative initiative."

A. A. Yeranova, Brigade Leader, Dimitrovgrad Motor Vehicle Machine Unit Plant Imeni 50-Letiye Oktyabrya, Ul'yanovskaya Oblast:

The brigade council plays a great role. The collective of fitters under my charge contains 45 persons. We elected a nine-man brigade council. It is very helpful to me in our educational effort. All violations of production or labor discipline are discussed by the council. There is nothing worse than appearing before a court consisting of one's comrades. And there is perhaps nothing more pleasant than hearing the praise of your own people.

Ye. A. Tishevskaya, Seamstress Brigade Leader, Zeyskiy Rayon Production Administration of Personal Service, RSFSR Distinguished Personal Services Worker:

A brigade leader's ties with the brigade council are very important. I believe that good contact is an indispensable prerequisite of effective production control by the brigade itself.

I. Ye. Kladov, Brigade Leader, Enlarged Integrated Port Worker Brigade, Novosibirsk River Port:

Developing a conscientious attitude toward work and the results of such work are closely related. Our brigade is officially supposed to have 64 people, but we are able to complete our work with a smaller number. Even at the peak of the sailing season our strength does not exceed 52 persons. When I was elected brigade leader, I immediately held a workers' conference. The members elected the most resourceful workers to the brigade council. We punish violations strictly. We distribute the portion of the wages above the wage scale, which is about 40 percent of the wages. If a worker is tardy, the brigade council has the power to forfeit the violator's bonus in its entirety. That is what we decided. We work with highly complex equipment. If a mechanic leaves his post at an unauthorized time, the entire production process may have to be halted. After all, this is an integrated team. It contains operators of cranes, loaders and other equipment. Our most important responsibility is to use this equipment as best as we can and to maintain mechanisms and materials properly.

V. K. Ivanov, Assistant Foreman, Cherkassy Silk Combine, Hero of Socialist Labor:

Unfortunately khozraschet brigades have not enjoyed adequate development in our combine: We have still not found a way to evaluate the personal contribution made by textile workers to the overall results of the brigade, or to stimulate the workers on the basis of the brigade's end results.

As I see it, no special recommendations have been made for solving these problems in application to our enterprise. In any case I am not aware of any such recommendations. Hero of Socialist Labor L. P. Arsen'yeva, a spinner from the Kalinin Cotton Combine, who is also present here, also mentioned that the effort to organize brigades of the new type are proceeding too slowly. There are several reasons for this, and it is very important to consider them, so that we could organize collective labor better.

We textile workers use the term "working for our replacement." This means that we must show concern not only for fulfilling our own quotas but also for leaving the loom in full working order for workers of the next shift. It has to be this way. Otherwise no one would be able to complete the plan.

Hence in my opinion the first thing we must do in textile industry is organize large brigades responsible for the entire process and covering all three shifts. The second thing we need to do is mandatorily include repair service workers in the brigades.

But in doing so we raise other problems. For example, as an assistant foreman I am responsible for 47 looms, while my colleague is responsible for 40. Were I to join forces with him, my productivity would drop immediately. On the other hand his would grow, but only if he is up to the work. That is where the problem lies. And now about the repairmen. How do we evaluate their work and how do we pay for it from the brigade's wage fund?

We are preparing more and more actively to create khozraschet brigades. This year the brigade form of labor organization should make its first strides. But careful preparations must first be made. A khozraschet brigade was organized in one of the shifts of our combine, but because of poor planning and shortcomings in the stimulation system, it did not last. This bitter experience should be considered.

We have assumed, as our rule of action, L. I. Brezhnev's appeal to each of us to make an active, persistent effort to develop and reinforce this progressive form of labor organization.

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Trade unions are to play an important role in solving the problems associated with developing the brigade form of labor organization and stimulation. They must provide active assistance to the administration in improving internal planning, in completing the plans for creating khozraschet brigades and in improving the systems of moral and material stimulation of collective labor, orienting the latter toward achievement of high end results.

11004
CSO: 1828/84

BENEFITS FOR WORKING WOMEN DETAILED

Latvian Child Care Allowances

Riga SOVETSKAYA LATVIYA in Russian 10 Mar 82 p 4

[Article by R. Paynshteyn, legal consultant of the Latvian Republic Trade Union Council, colleague of the SOVETSKAYA LATVIYA Supernumerary Trade Unic.: Affairs Department: "New Benefits for Mothers"]

[Text] Complying with the Basic Directions of the USSR's Economic and Social Development in 1981-1985 and in the Period to 1990, the party and government are taking steps to create better possibilities for mothers to care for infants and young children and to increase state assistance to large families. Ukazes of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet and decrees of the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers concerning this subject have been published.

Many working mothers want to know whether they are entitled to supplementary leave, and from what date our republic will begin paying monthly allowances for infant care and larger one-time allowances at the time of the birth of a child. These benefits will be discussed in detail below.

Since 1981 working women with two or more children up to 12 years old have been given 3 days of supplementary paid leave each year irrespective of the mother's place of employment and the national economic sector.

This leave is to be granted as a rule simultaneously with the annual (main) leave. At the desire of the worker, this leave may also be granted at any other time convenient to her. In the year that the child reaches an age of 12 years the 3-day supplementary leave is granted irrespective of when the child attains this age (before the woman goes on her annual leave or after she returns).

The supplementary 3-day paid leave is granted above and beyond the minimum leave (above and beyond the 15-day leave). This 3-day leave is treated additively in relation to other supplementary leaves; in this case the total leave time of female workers receiving a supplementary 3-day leave must not exceed 28 calendar days, to include days off falling within leaves.

Since 1981 women having two or more children up to 12 years old have been granted the right to unpaid supplementary child care leave lasting up to 2 weeks.

This leave is granted with the consent of the administration, in a time period permitted by the production conditions.

An unpaid supplementary child care leave may be taken together with the annual (main) leave, or it may be granted separately (both completely and in parts). Such leave time cannot be carried over to the next work year.

The time of such leave is included in the total and continuous time of work, in the time of work in the specialty, and in the time of work entitling the worker to her next annual leave.

This leave does not influence the amount of the average wages paid to the female worker during her annual paid leave.

Since 1981 unworking women with two or more children up to 12 years old have enjoyed priority consideration for annual leave in summer or in periods convenient to them.

This right of the working mother must be accounted for when drawing up the leave schedule for the corresponding calendar year.

The amount of the state allowance to unmarried mothers was increased to 20 rubles per month per child in December 1981.

This allowance is paid until the child reaches an age of 16 years (18 years for students not receiving a scholarship).

Since 1 November 1982 working mothers in the Latvian SSR who had accrued a total work time of not less than 1 year and women attending school with leave from production have been entitled to a partially paid leave to care for a child until its attainment of an age of 1 year, and an unpaid supplementary child care leave until the child reaches an age of a year and a half.

The allowance paid in our republic for the care of a child until 1 year old will be 35 rubles per month. If the child was born before the partially paid leave went into effect (prior to 1 November 1982 in the republic), the allowance paid during leave is reckoned from the day such payment was introduced (naturally on the condition that the child had not reached an age of 1 year by this time).

The decision to pay a monthly allowance during a leave granted to a woman until her child reaches an age of 1 year is made by the social insurance commission of the trade union's factory-plant committee for maternal affairs. The allowance--35 rubles per month--is to be paid each month on the date wages for the second half of the month or stipends are paid.

Also beginning in November 1982, the Latvian SSR will introduce payment of a one-time state allowance of 50 rubles at the birth of the first child and 100 rubles at the birth of the second and third children.

Working women or women attending school with leave from production will be entitled to the one-time allowances. If a woman is not working and not attending school, a one-time allowance of 30 rubles is paid to the child's father who is working or

attending school with leave from production. A one-time allowance for the birth of a child will be paid if the child had been born not earlier than 1 November 1982. This allowance will also be granted by the social insurance commission of the plant-factory committee for maternal affairs.

Female Labor Restrictions, Rights

Moscow EKONOMICHESKAYA GAZETA in Russian No 11, Mar 82 p 23

[Article: "Benefits for Women"]

[Text] The Legal Department of the AUCCTU answers questions from our readers.

[Question] In what ways are women restricted from heavy and hazardous work?

[Answer] According to Article 160 of the RSFSR KZoT [Labor Code], women are prohibited from heavy work and from work in harmful working conditions, as well as from work under ground, with the exception of nonphysical jobs or jobs associated with sanitary and personal services. Jointly with the AUCCTU and on coordination with the USSR Ministry of Public Health, the USSR State Committee for Labor and Social Problems has approved a list of production operations, professions and jobs associated with heavy and harmful working conditions from which women are prohibited. The administration of an enterprise or an organization does not have the right to hire a woman for work in a profession indicated on the list of prohibited, harmful and heavy jobs. Violation of the laws prohibiting the use of female labor in heavy and harmful jobs is a punishable offense to the officials responsible.

According to Article 161 of the RSFSR KZoT women are also prohibited from night work, except in those sectors of the national economy in which there is a special need and in which it is permitted as a temporary measure. The collective contracts of a number of enterprises foresee measures to reduce or completely eliminate night work for women. Textile industry enterprises, which use female labor predominantly, employ a work schedule with a shorter night shift. The law also contains direct prohibitions of night work for women. Thus for example, Paragraph 10 of the Statute on Work Time and Leisure Time of Motor Vehicle Drivers, approved by a 16 August 1977 decree of the USSR State Committee for Labor and Social Problems and the AUCCTU, states that night work must not be foreseen for woman drivers in the shift schedules.

Pregnant women and nursing mothers as well as women with children up to 1 year old are not permitted to work at night.

[Question] What limitations are there on the loads women can carry and move?

[Answer] Some occupations require the carrying and movement of loads. Legislation has established the maximum norms for the carrying and movement of loads by women. A woman must be made aware of the maximum norms at the time she is hired for work involving the carrying or movement of loads. The union republic labor codes prohibit the carrying and movement of loads by women above and beyond the maximum norms. New norms for the maximum permissible loads that could be raised and moved manually by women were introduced into the national economy in 1981. The new norms introduced in 1981-1985 for the maximum permissible loads that could be lifted and

carried by women state that the maximum weight of a single heavy item lifted and carried must not exceed 15 kg. The new norms for maximum permissible loads that can be lifted and moved by women manually were approved on 27 January 1982 by the USSR State Committee for Labor and Social Problems and the AUCCTU, on coordination with the USSR Ministry of Public Health. The measures associated with introducing the new norms are to be implemented by USSR ministries and departments and by the councils of ministers of the union republics during the 11th Five-Year Plan by deadlines established jointly with the central committees and republic trade union councils.

[Question] When is a part-time work day granted to women?

[Answer] A part-time work week or a part-time work day, for which wages are paid in proportion to the time worked or depending on output, may be granted on the basis of an agreement between the administration and the laborers and white collar workers. This provision may be established on agreement between the administration and a female worker with children, both at the moment she is hired and at a future date; the time such a provision remains in effect may be unlimited, or it may be limited to a period of time convenient to the female worker, for example until her child reaches a certain age, for the school year, or the time of a school vacation and so on. The work-rest schedule of women with children and working part time is set by the administration on coordination with the trade union's plant-factory committee for maternal affairs, with a consideration for the wishes of the woman.

Part-time work does not impose any sort of limitations on the duration of the annual leave, on time of work computations and on other labor rights. Supplementary leaves allowing for a nonstandard work day may be granted to women with children and working part time in the event that the labor contract provides for a part time week but full work days. The time worked by part-time workers is included in both the total and continuous time of work and in the time of work in the specialty.

Domestic labor, which helps to introduce additional labor resources into the national economy, has been broadly practiced in recent years. Women with children up to 15 years old are given preferential consideration in the signing of a labor contract for domestic labor.

[Question] What sort of benefits have been established for pregnant women and nursing mothers?

[Answer] Pregnant women and nursing mothers as well as women with children up to 1 year old enjoy special benefits. Article 73 of the Fundamental Principles of Labor Legislation prohibit denial of employment to women and reduction of their wages for reasons associated with pregnancy or the nursing of a child.

The administration is prohibited from dismissing pregnant women, nursing mothers and women with children up to 1 year old except when the institution, enterprise or organization is completely liquidated and when their dismissal is possible. In this case, however, finding replacement jobs for them is mandatory.

Pregnant women, nursing mothers and mothers with children less than 1 year old are prohibited, with no exceptions, from night work, from overtime work, from work on days off and from business trips. Women with children from 1 to 8 years old may be

asked to work overtime or to go on business trips only with their consent. On the advice of a physician, pregnant women are to be given other, lighter employment while retaining the average wages they received in their previous job. Such transfer is also possible in relation to nursing mothers and women with children up to 1 year old, if they are unable to continue in their previous job, for example in connection with medical contraindications or the nature of the work responsibilities.

Women are granted leave for pregnancy and labor extending from 56 calendar days prior to labor to 56 days (70 in the case of abnormal labor or the birth of two or more children) following labor, and if they so desire and if they have accrued a total work time of not less than 1 year, they may be granted a partially paid leave to care for the child until it reaches an age of 1 year. State social insurance allowances are to be paid during these periods.

In addition to the kinds of leaves indicated above, a woman may apply for and receive supplementary leave without pay to care for a child until an age of 1.5 years. The effective dates of such leaves are indicated in Decree No 865 of the USSR Council of Ministers and the AUCCTU, dated 2 September 1981.

Collective Contract Provisions for Women

Moscow EKONOMICHESKAYA GAZETA No 17, Apr 82 p 16

[Article: "The Collective Contract: Working Conditions for Women"]

> [Text] In April-May enterprises and organizations will begin preparations for the signing of collective contracts for 1983. Many of our readers have written letters to the editor requesting information on the order of drawing up a collective contract, and particularly the section "Working and Personal Conditions of Female Workers, Assistance to Child Rearing."
>
> The AUCCTU public employment counseling section offers advice.

[Question] What is the order of drawing up a collective contract, and what responsibilities of the administration for improving the organization of the work and personal conditions of female workers should it include?

[Answer] A collective contract is drafted by the administration of the association, enterprise or organization and by the trade union committee.

Permanent production conferences, organizations of the scientific-technical society and the All-Union Society of Inventors and Efficiency Experts, public creative associations of laborers, the Komsomol committee and other public organizations must take an active part in the drafting of the collective contract. The signing of a collective contract is preceded by collection of proposals from laborers and white collar workers, organized annually to start in April-May.

The collective contract establishes the mutual obligations of the administration, the collective of laborers and white collar workers and the trade union committee associated with raising production effectiveness and work quality and creating

favorable working, personal and leisure conditions for laborers and white collar workers. Special attention should be turned in the collective contract to improving the organization of working and personal conditions for female workers.

Detailed recommendations on the order of drafting this section of the collective contract were drawn up by AUCCTU sections jointly with the women's work commission of the AUCCTU Presidium. In accordance with these recommendations the collective contract must include responsibilities of the administration for mechanizing and automating the labor of female workers; concrete measures to introduce new equipment, technology and advanced work methods must be indicated. The obligations of the administration must include transferring women from heavy physical labor and from harmful working conditions to lighter work more in keeping with their qualifications.

The working conditions of female workers in shops, sections and production operations dominated by female labor must correspond to the norms and requirements of labor protection and to the standard plans of scientific organization of labor. The contract must indicate the concrete measures to reduce the dust and gas content of the air, noise, vibration, work monotony and so on. Moreover the contract includes the obligations of the administration for expanding and improving personal services, for introducing progressive forms of trade, for public food services and for personal services.

[Question] Must legislative norms on protection of the labor of women be included in a collective contract?

[Answer] The universally recognized provisions of legislation on labor of women need not be included in the collective contract because observance of these provisions is already binding upon enterprises and organizations.

The collective contract must contain responsibilities and measures ensuring compliance with these norms or elaborating upon certain provisions of laws applicable to the conditions of the given labor collective.

As an example Decree No 235 of the CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers dated 22 January 1981, "On Measures to Intensify State Assistance to Families With Children," foresees supplementary 3-day paid leave for working women with two or more children up to 12 years old. In this connection the collective contract may include the responsibilities of the administration for granting such leave to women: either concurrently with the main annual leave or, at the wish of the female worker, at any other time convenient to her. These responsibilities are not redundant in relation to the law: They simple elaborate upon the law in application to the conditions and possibilities of the given production operation.

[Question] How are responsibilities for protecting motherhood and rendering assistance to female workers in the raising of their children reflected in the collective contract?

[Answer] The Soviet state exhibits great concern that a woman should not only do work in keeping with her qualifications but also that she should work in conditions favorable to her health. The female laborer is granted certain benefits and advantages permitting her to combine work with motherhood. In this connection the

collective contract must contain responsibilities for creating production capacities that would make it possible to organize the work of women with children on a flexible schedule and on a part-time basis, and for creating conditions permitting work at home. Favorable working conditions must be created for pregnant women and nursing mothers, the schedule should be organized such that they would work only in the first shift, and they should be provided free medicines and food.

The contract must foresee measures to satisfy the demand for children's preschool and children's health institutions, to organize the after-school leisure time of the children of the enterprise workers and to render assistance to mothers with large families, unmarried mothers and poor families (priority provision of housing to families containing juvenile twins or three or more children, provision of passes to children's preschool institutions and health institutions for school-age children to mothers with large families and unmarried mothers).

[Question] What sort of questions connected with improving the skills and raising the general educational level of female workers are resolved in the collective contract?

[Answer] Collective contracts must foresee the responsibilities of the administration and the collective of laborers and white collar workers for raising the job qualification and general education level of female workers. Technical production courses, courses providing training in second and associated occupations as well as in new occupations making use of modern equipment, specific-purpose courses, schools providing instruction on the best work methods and so on are created at the enterprises for this purpose. Female workers with children up to 8 years old must be allowed the possibility for undergoing occupational training in advanced training courses with leave from work, retaining the average monthly wages during the time of training.

11004
CSO: 1828/76

MANPOWER UTILIZATION IN KIRGHIZ SSR

Frunze SOVETSKAYA KIRGIZIYA in Russian 17 Apr 82 p 3

[Article by A. Usubaliyev, head of the department of manpower, State Committee for Labor KiSSR: L. Syuravchik, chief economist, department of manpower: "Labor Resources: Use and Allocation"]

[Text] The growth of labor resources in our country will slow down somewhat in the coming years because of a series of demographic and socioeconomic factors. As was pointed out at the 26th CPSU Congress, the 1980's will see a careful and economical handling of personnel. Decisions of an economic, technical, social, and educational nature will have to be made.

The KiSSR State Committee for Labor, 4 of its oblast departments, 29 job placement agencies, and 23 labor representatives are studying the problems of a rational use of labor resources and the implementation of labor controls in our republic. This work is being carried out in close cooperation with party, soviet, and planning organizations.

In cities and in rayons the bureaus and representatives are handling job placement of the temporarily unemployed and also of high school graduates, are sending workers to enterprises and building sites in accord with organized recruitment, are organizing the resettlement of families in rural areas, and are drawing back into the productive sphere willing-to-work pensioners, invalids, and those engaged in domestic and secondary occupations.

Those who turn to our organizations find that they spend four to five times less time than do those who look for work on their own. Therefore they more frequently find the type of work they are looking for.

The system of organized job placement allows us to carry out the top priority task of bringing up to strength the personnel of the republic's main industrial and construction enterprises. Among them are such industrial leaders of the republic as the Frunze factory of agricultural machinery building. the industrial association of autobuilding Kirgizavtomash, the electronic computer works 50 years USSR, the largest light-industry complex Kirghiz worsted cloth enterprise, the Osh cotton works 50 Years October, the Tokmak worsted spinning mills, and a series of building organizations. Nine out of every 10 people going to work at these enterprises have been sent by labor agencies.

Young people coming into the labor market play a vital role in our nation's economy. In the future they will constitute the core of the working class, the peasantry, the intelligentsia. Understanding this, our specialists are taking part in professional job orientation and job placement for high school graduates. Together with labor commissions for youth affiliated with city and rayon soviets of people's deputies, with educational organizations, they inform schools about the labor demands of the city and rayon, take part in discussions, evening sessions, meetings, and conduct gatherings of high school graduates, and publish articles on these subjects in the local press.

For example, the job placement agency of the city of Frunze has over the years conducted springtime meetings between graduating students of the city and representatives of industrial enterprises, construction, and trade schools.

Along with the work of educational organizations and Komsomol committees, verifications, press investigations, and inquiries into actual job placement and job retention among youth are being carried out. Therefore, the task is such: to reach each graduating student, each youth about to enter the job market.

This is particularly important now in our republic. At the present time, for example, in rayons of the Chuyskaya Valley where industry is developed, a shortage of labor is being felt in the rural areas. Concern has been caused by the fact that the work force in these areas is growing older. The average age of sugar beet harvesters on several kolkhozes and sovkhozes is already approaching 50. This can be chiefly explained by the mass exodus of young men and women from the village. Meanwhile many farm directors do not undertake job retention measures for young people, do not display the necessary concern in creating adequate cultural and social conditions, in creating a high degree of mechanized production. So in 1981, out of all high school graduates sent to work, less than a third were placed in jobs on kolkhozes and sovkhozes in rayons of the republic.

A different picture is to be found in remote regions of the republic where, because of historical circumstances, there is very little mobility of the native population. Young people there in general remain in their native village, often not finding work appropriate to their abilities. Therefore labor organizations of these areas have a different problem: to increase the mobility of rural youth, to bring them into industrial work, construction, and other areas of production.

The 1981-85 plan for economic and social development in the republic envisages the building and expansion of 22 labor-intensive branches of industry, the majority of which will be staffed with personnel from cities and rural regions of the republic which have an overabundant labor supply. This will bring about an increase of employment and bring into the productive sphere an additional 30,000 people. Further development will also include those working at home. Associations of those working at home and their branch organizations will be set up and expanded in the cities of Frunze, Osh, Naryn, Tokmak, Talas, and in the Allayskiy, Bazar-Kurganskiy, Leninpolskiy and other rayons of the republic. This will bring about an increase of those working at home to 13,300 people.

Our organizations also have the task of carrying out state control on the use of manpower by enterprises, organizations, and farms, and also on their adherence to labor plans, especially numerical limits on blue and white-collar workers. And there has been a considerable number of violations. In 1981 84 industrial enterprises of the republic committed such violations. The Sulyutkinskiy and Kyzyl-Kiyskiy mine directorships, the Przhevalskiy brick factory, the Dzhalal-Abadskiy baked goods association, and the Belovodskiy house paneling factory constantly violate numerical norms established for labor. The State Labor Committee has sent to these organizations 33 injunctions in order to bring the number of workers actually hired in line with those established by plan.

A successful management of manpower is impossible without a constant study of demographic processes, an analysis of the composition of and outlook for economic development of regions of the republic. Such a study was formerly carried out on the basis of a balance of manpower, worked up each year by local labor organizations within the limits of their territories.

However, this balance, reflecting a general condition, gives no information about how the economy's labor demands shall be met in the long run, contains no data about the economy and other social processes. Therefore, the committee's manpower department has drawn up a system of compiling the economic-demographic characteristics of the republic's cities and rayons which will give a complete picture of the nature of the economy and of personnel usage and contain much information necessary for long-range planning and the study of social processes and phenomena.

Besides this, the State Committee for Labor KiSSR and MVD of the republic have begun a joint study of the process of population movement.

All these materials will become the basis upon which plans for the social and economic development of each city and rayon will be worked out, the basis for a rational allocation of the work force.

In the course of carrying out their work, job placement agencies have their difficulties. It often happens that enterprises violate agreements reached with job placement agencies.

A number of enterprises and organizations of Frunze and Osh, contrary to established procedures, continue to hire people apart from the agency. Most prominent among the offenders are the association Kirgizmebel, the Frunze baked goods association, the Tokmak meat processing plant, and the Tokmak motor transport depot. This creates difficulties in the control and calculation of manpower movement in branches of the economy, which in turn leads to a great fluctuation of manpower.

Further development and perfection of organized allocation and reallocation of manpower, an increased effectiveness of the work of labor organizations will significantly facilitate the resolution of the social and economic goals put forth during the 11th Five-Year Plan.

9964
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UNAUTHORIZED LEAVE IN SOVIET INDUSTRY DISCUSSED

Nature of Unauthorized Leave

Moscow KHOZYAYSTVO I PRAVO in Russian No 1, Jan 82 pp 26-31

[Article by KHOZYAYSTVO I PRAVO special correspondent A. Turbanov: "He Did Not Get Down to Work..."]

[Text] The large-scale tasks on the increase of the efficiency of the national economy and its intensification, which were outlined by the 26th CPSU Congress, require, as is emphasized in the decree of the November (1981) CPCU Central Committee Plenum, the increase of organization, efficiency, the tightening up of state and labor discipline. In this connection the questions of the combatting of unauthorized leaves, which lead to considerable losses of working time, are acquiring particular urgency. With each year the cost of a minute of work is increasing. In industry alone output worth 1.2 million rubles is produced in a minute. The causes of unauthorized leaves and the improvement of the methods of combatting them are the theme of the selection of materials, which is offered to the reader.

The Price of Time

The foreman of the machine shop of the Tashkhimsel'mash Plant on the morning of the last day of the month, when every pair of hands counts, made a telephone call, imploring the milling machine operator to take up the second shift and come to the plant immediately: his fellow worker had not shown up. The timekeeper even earlier had called the latter at home, then called the polyclinic, but no one knew anything.

But after a week the "missing man" showed up at the shop. At the meeting of the shop committee, sullenly looking at the floor, he related that he and his brother had gone to the melon field. "What cantaloups, watermelons. It would not come to naught...."

Such a thing happens, alas, quite frequently. It is not difficult to imagine what losses we incur, how much output fails to be supplied, if you consider the following data: at the end of the 10th Five-Year Plan as a result of losses of working time due to unauthorized leaves, the recorded full-day and intrashift idle times and absences from work with the permission of the administration in industry more

than 170,000 people did not work daily. If they suddenly all turned out to be workers of the AvtoVAZ and Moskvich Motor Vehicle Associations, neither Zhigulis not Moskviches would be seen on our roads.

But just what follows after an unauthorized leave?

Of course, punishment follows it, the figures of an analysis, which show what the "initiative" of the workers cost the collectives, follow it. A ruthless struggle must be waged against absentees and drunkards, applying the most severe types of punishment and using to the full extent the rights granted to the administration and the committees of the trade union. But the fate of a person also always lies behind an unauthorized leave. And in socialist society the fate of each person is far from unimportant for society.

At times one may hear: "In Japan (or Turkey) you would not be absent from work!"

Indeed, the truncheon of unemployment forces people in the capitalist countries to work with constant anxiety about their future, to bear insults, to do everything that is ordered. So labor becomes bondage, while the number of unemployed increases relentlessly. Whereas in England, for example, in the spring of 1979 there were 1 million unemployed, now there are 3 million. In other capitalist countries crowds of people camp at the doorstep of the labor exchanges for months, or else for years. No, they are not waiting for a job in their specialty, they are willing to work wherever you want and to do what every you want.

In the USSR Constitution it is stated: "The state, by combining material and moral stimuli, promotes the transformation of labor into the first vital need of each Soviet individual."

It is clear why society is constantly seeking the most effective means of combatting unauthorized leaves.

Owing to a number of objective reasons during the 11th Five-Year Plan the influx of manpower into the national economy is decreasing appreciably. But newer and newer enterprises are being put into operation, the stories of new construction projects are rising. For this reason the questions of the economy of labor expenditures and the production of a larger amount of output with fewer people are becoming so urgent. For the cost of working time is increasing with each year.

One minute of labor of industry of the country is:

300 tons of steel;

more than 1,000 tons of petroleum and gas condensate;

2.5 million kWh of electric power.

The Strength of the Brigade

Decree No 1117 of the CPSU Central Committee, the USSR Council of Ministers and the AUCCTU of 13 December 1979 closely links the tightening up of labor discipline and the decrease of the turnover of personnel with the changeover to collective forms

of the organization of labor and wages. This relationship has been demonstrated by the experience of many leading enterprises and construction projects. A law has been noticed: wherever the number of people working in brigades increases, the curve of violations of labor discipline declines. And this is understandable. For the lone pieceworker an unauthorized absence will turn into a loss which is expressed in rubles, if worst come to worst into a reprimand in an order, which they will take down from the board in 2 or 3 days. But he will quickly find exoneration for himself: "I will buckle down and turn over the parts which I owed."

I remember that at one enterprise, in recognizing fashion, they purchased a Lider unit. It determined the workload of the machine tools, the arrival of blanks and much more. But all its electronic efforts were reduced to naught by one simple factor--the failure of the pieceworker-lathe operator to show up at work. The foreman of the section threw the calculations into the waste basket and proceeded to conventional methods of management: he shift the workers, begged, called them from home and so on. The Lider was such after a year, when the workers were united in cost accounting brigades. How do they look upon unauthorized leaves here?

N. Dorofeyev, a lathe and drill operator of the Kaluga Turbine Plant, related:

"There was an extraordinary event 2 years ago. A young worker took an unauthorized leave. He was summoned to the council of the brigade: 'Here is what the "arithmetic" turns out to be: due to the unauthorized leave you have lost, counting wages, the bonus and the 13th wage, 150 rubles. But that is not all. Because of you we will not take first place in the socialist competition. Thus, you have also picked your comrades' pocket. Explain!' I would not want to be in this fellow's shoes."

Now at the Kaluga Turbine Plant, as at the Leningrad Pozitron Scientific Production Association, an unauthorized absence is an extraordinary event. Let us note that they did not use here any special measures against violators of discipline. The very organization of labor, the wage system and the relations between the people, who know the end result of their labor, in practice rule out the possibility of unauthorized leaves.

USSR State Prize winner I. Skvortsov, chief of a shop of the Pozitron Scientific Production Association, explains as follows the essence of what has been done:

"The SKE (the 'quality-efficiency' system), for which the brigade form of the organization of labor with work on one order and pay in accordance with the end result is the basis, has been used successfully here since the beginning of the 10th Five-Year Plan. All the activity of the brigades is regulated by a set of standard documents, which specify the procedure of planning, the organization of labor and wages.

"The system influences labor discipline morally and materially. On the one hand, the responsibility to comrades in the case of work on a single order increases, on the other, the share of the bonus in wages increases sharply. While in the case of the technically sound norms which we have adopted, their overfulfillment cannot exceed 4 percent. No matter how you 'buckle down,' you will not return the lost money!"

Now about 1.2 million brigades, which unite nearly 50 percent of the workers, operate at industrial enterprises. In 1981 by the use of this form it is proposed to provide a saving of the labor of 28,000 people. For the combining of occupations and the fulfillement of the set amount of work with fewer workers supplementary payments can be established for individual workers or all the members of the brigade--up to 50 percent of the wage rate or salary, on which it is possible to spend the saving of the wage fund. The amount of the supplementary payments are usually set by the administration with the consent of the trade union committee in accordance with the statement of the council of the brigade. The brigade is more and more often being called the link which should stand first in the way of unauthorized leave. Is this so?

"Of course it is," responds Hero of Socialist Labor Vladimir Andreyevich Zatvornitskiy, the leader of a brigade of Moscow construction workers. "Here I see at times during working time construction workers (I know from the special work clothing) at the beer stall and I immediately note for myself: the brigade is not working according to the Zlobin method. If it were working on a contract, the people would count every minute, would know who does what, while not so much the deprivation of the bonus as responsibility to the comrades whom he has let down would restrain the potential absentee from a violation."

The Prestige of the Occupation

The influence of the organization of labor and working conditions on the state of labor discipline is diverse. It is no secret that the bulk of the unauthorized leaves fall to workers with low skills and so-called unprestigious occupations. The instances when a worker of a high grade takes an unauthorized leave are extremely rare.

The data of the Institute of Sociological Research of the USSR Academy of Sciences attest that the wage rates are far from always the main stimulus when selecting a place of work. "Working conditions" and "relations in the collective" are named in the questionnaires in front of them. It is characteristic that the initiative of the Zaporozh'ye workers "Manual labor on the shoulders of machines" was also brought about by the shortage of manpower, especially where difficult manual labor was used. Now at the Zaporozh'ye Abrasive Combine imeni 50-letiya Sovetskoy Ukrainy the degree of the mechanization of loading and unloading operations comes to 96.4 percent. And whereas earlier the dismissal for unauthorized absence, for example, of a loader was regarded as an undesirable phenomenon and, being afraid of losing him, they limited themselves at the plant to an admonition, now he does not receive indulgences.

"The Improvement of Working Conditions" is an indispensable section of collective contracts. But the ability to take a risk, to forego tactical interests for the sake of strategic interests, to know how to demonstrate the validity of a stand, the need for temporary losses for the sake of future gain is rarely required of the administration for the performance of duties.

Imagine a machine tool building plant. The foundry: black bays, primitive ventilation, heavy mold boxes with foundry sand. The assembly plant: the units stand against each other, there is nowhere to turn, the assemblers interfere with each other.

No, this is not a lagging enterprise. The Yegor'yevsk Komsomolets Machine Tool Building Plant was this way several years ago. The Challenge Red Banner of the Ministry of the Machine Tool and Tool Building Industry stood in the director's office. All the technical and economic indicators, especially the output-capital ratio, were high. But then the number of statements on leaving did not decrease, while the number of unauthorized leaves increased.

And Director V. Shashkin was able to demonstrate at the ministry the need for renovation: "The working conditions will improve in the foundry and assembly plant. But the output of machine tools will increase not by much, the output-capital ratio will decrease." It was not simple, but he proved that the improvement of working conditions still would have a positive effect on the economy and, what is the main thing, on the attitude of the people toward their own plant.

"Now we are renovating the works while running," the director relates. "The difficulties are behind, the plant is again taking first class positions in the competition. And absentees here have practically vanished. I only believe that we are encouraging the leaders too little--somehow ineptly, hastily. But the distance between a good and a bad worker should be sensed by the entire collective."

In the collectives, of which it was a question, the absentees have been forced out by the very system of the organization of production and wages. These are leading enterprises, and here we merely wanted to show the possibility of the creation of working conditions and a social climate, which in practice rules out the need for the use of disciplinary measures. But there is also another side of the coin.

By the Entire World

In the middle of this year the legal departments of the AUCCTU and the USSR State Committee for Labor and Social Problems conducted separately a survey of workers at various enterprises and construction projects. The responses locally are quite alarming: the appeal to combat unauthorized leaves more actively and to use disciplinary measures of influence against violators is heard distrinctly. What now awaits the absentee? How effective is punishment? What do the workers of the enterprises suggest?

At the Magnitogorsk Metallurgical Combine (in addition to dismissal) the deprivation of the bonus and the 13th wage, the decrease of the amount of additional leave for a continuous length of service, the postponement within the year of regular leave from the summer months to the winter months, the denial during the year from the moment of the commission of the offense of the purchase of a concessionary travel authorization, while for the taking of several unauthorized leaves the shift of one's turn for receiving housing may await the absentee. The proposal of the legal department on the inclusion of the indicated conditions in the collective contract is now being reviewed at the plant. Approximately the same measures of influence are also being used in other places.

But what about effectiveness? Some believe that the majority of unauthorized leaves are taken randomly, out of negligence. This is not so. At the end of the year their number decreases sharply, for the 13th wage is seen ahead, their number is also minimal before the planned summer leaves, but increases after them.

Take the young absentee. Which of the forms of influence is frightening to him? The travel authorization and apartment do not worry: he has just come to the enterprise. This is the period when a person has still not earned what it is possible to be afraid of losing. Moreover, he is confident: any day they would hire him at another enterprise, he has seen advertisements which begin with the word "needed." These reasons, as is evident from the questionnaire, also "allow" the young workers of the Alma-Ata Elektrobytpribor Plant to go away for holidays and family celebrations for a week, or else longer.

Among absentees those who appeared at work drunk form a special group. In the majority of questionnaires the opinions on such people coincide: to dismiss the drunkards in accordance with the appropriate article and not to hire them for a job without the orders of the organs for labor. Everything seems to be correct. But the misfortune is that such people do not especially burn with the desire to work.

It seems that the proposal of the collective of the Nikopol' Construction Materials Plant merits attention: to use in practice the transfer of drunkards, who have taken unauthorized leave, to a lower paying job for up to 3 months. The period is substantial enough to realize whether the person has changed, whether he has come to his senses. But what if he has not? Some suggest in the case of dismissal at one's own request not to pay compensation for the unused leave, others propose not to pay the doctor's certificates for a year from the time of dismissal, still others propose to shorten the regular leave by the number of days of unauthorized leave. It is also proposed to recover the damage by order of the court. Such a limitation of the rights of the worker, in our opinion, can in no way be acceptable.

The complete or partial deprivation of people, who have taken unauthorized leaves, of the additional leave for a continuous length of service is stipulated in the decree of the CPSU Central Committee, the USSR Council of Ministers and the AUCCTU "On the Further Tightening Up of Labor Discipline and the Decrease of the Turnover of Personnel in the National Economy." But they did not do this at the Nazarovskiy Open Pit of the Krasnoyarskugol' Production Association and at several other enterprises. Apparently, not all managers of enterprises have studied this decree thoroughly and are not using the stipulated measures in combatting unauthorized leaves, but it is already time to learn to use them.

And He Should Be Punished!

Against the general background of the serious anxiety about the number of unauthorized leaves the fact which V. Gusakov, the head of the Labor Department of the Turgayskaya Oblast Executive Committee, reports, seems paradoxical: "The Turgayskaya Oblast Vtorchermet Administration in accordance with the results of the first quarter of 1981 awarded the Yesil' Section a pennant and a monetary onus. L., who was absent from work for 2 days, received a bonus in the amount of 45 rubles. V., who was absent from work for 3 days, received a bonus in the amount of 40 rubles. An award for seniority was also paid to them."

The case, let us say frankly, is unique. But it is well known that absentees at times live a free and easy life. And here it is a matter of the durability of an unsound practice which has taken root here and there. It is no secret that due to "open work" in the reporting the cases of unauthorized leaves are concealed at

times. The workdays, which then the absentee works off or for which he is deprived only of the wage in excess of the rate, are put in the table.

How do you evaluate educational work, including the combatting of unauthorized leaves? The question is not idle. For example, in rail transport, when judging the state of labor discipline at the line enterprises, they compare the collectives of the permanent way division and the signaling and communications division, forgetting that the former hires all those who want to, while the latter, in having a high level of technical equipment, takes only reliable workers who value their specialty. Like must be compared with like.

But the evaluation of the effectiveness of the combatting of unauthorized leaves should be, in our opinion, one of the links of an integral system, which includes legal and sociopsychological measures of influence against the violators of labor discipline. Not one absentee should remain unpunished, conscientious labor should always be commended. A significant role in the creation of such a system at an enterprise belongs to the legal services.

At one of the enterprises I spoke with a young lathe operator, who had been removed from his job for coming to work drunk. He was not very upset. In the note of explanation he wrote that yesterday he had sent off a friend to the army, and starting in the morning had taken a drink to get rid of his hangover.

"Well, at worst they will dismiss me. I will go to work at another plant."

It turned out that he knew nothing about the fact that unfavorable legal consequences set in for those dismissed from work for unauthorized leave: the length of service is interrupted, for half a year the doctor's certificate is not paid. But knowledge would not do harm. For in order to understand the severity of an offense, it is also necessary to know fully the extent of responsibility for it.

A Jacket on the Chair

A light burns over the machine tool, the tools are laid out, but the chuck is not turning, there is no worker at the place. At the scientific research institute a "diplomat" stands next to the desk, a jacket hangs on the chair, but they have been seeking their owner for a solid hour. And involuntarily you ponder the real meaning of the term "unauthorized leave."

Many plant grounds can compete with parks of culture and recreation. Here the lathe operater went to get a breath of fresh air, to enjoy the fragrance of the flowering apple trees, without leaving the plant. And the owner of the "diplomat" manages to see a movie at the nearest movie theater or.... One can manage anything. A worker appears at his place only 5 minutes before the end of work, and all the same he will not be punished for unauthorized leave. For in the Commentary on Labor Legislation it is written: "Being late for work (regardless of by how much), leaving from it early, loafing or sleeping during working time are not unauthorized leave and cannot serve as a reason for dismissal on the grounds in question" (p 65). Is this just?

To be sure, neither being late nor leaving work early is an unauthorized leave. But the fact that the degrees of punishment for unauthorized leave and for being

late are far from the same, is also just. It is not secret that "secretive" absentees take advantage of this, often doing more harm to production than open absentees, since their absence from work frequently turns into a system, and the "absent" hours are paid for regularly and in full. There is something to think about.

At every enterprise there is an Honor Board. But it is necessary to speak about the need for not only "red," but also "black" boards. The names of absentees, including "secretive" absentees, the measures of punishment and excerpts from the standard documents should be mentioned there.

At the 26th CPSU Congress Comrade L. I. Brezhnev said: "We have no unemployment. The right to work is recorded in our Constitution and is really guaranteed. But in the Constitution in accordance with numerous suggestions of the working people another thing is recorded: 'the evasion of social labor is incompatible with the principles of socialism....'" A struggle must be waged against this evasion by organizational, legal and other means, a well-balanced system must be created, which would close tightly the loopholes for those who want to live at the expense of others.

A noisy stream of people heads toward the entrance gate of the plant, drifting away beyond it among the shops and departments. The workday has begun. But the machine tool has not been turned on, the power driver has not descended, the rulers of the Kuhlman drafting unit have not begun to rustle over the Whatman paper. People are absent from work. Why? What must be done so that everyone who should would pass through the entrance gate of the plant this day and would take their workplaces? The questions are difficult from all points of view. They are upsetting and force one to think about many things.

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Causes of Unauthorized Leaves

Moscow KHOZYAYSTVO I PRAVO in Russian No 1, Jan 82 pp 31-35

[Article by Doctor of Economic Sciences N. Safronov, deputy director of the Scientific Research Institute of Labor, and Candidate of Economic Sciences A. Umanskiy, deputy director of the Ukrainian Branch of the Scientific Research Institute of Labor: "Unauthorized Leaves: How to Combat Them"]

[Text] What Is Behind an Unauthorized Leave?

In order to ensure the effectiveness of measures on combatting unauthorized leaves at an enterprise, first of all one must determine the main directions of this complicated and multilevel work, the most successful forms, methods and means under the conditions of the given collective of influencing the workers who commit violations of labor discipline. A system of the recording and analysis of the causes of unauthorized leaves, which makes it possible to identify who takes them and why, to be sure, should be the basis for the performance of such work.

However, the existing practice of recording violations of labor discipline does not make it possible to identify with sufficient reliability the real causes of unauthorized leaves, as well as their true scale. As a result, the effectiveness of the measures being elaborated and of all the work decreases.

As an analysis made by the Scientific Research Institute of Labor showed, unauthorized absences result for the most part from the following causes:

a) the lack of personal discipline of the workers, drunkenness, alcoholism, poor work on the combatting of these phenomena, shortcomings in educational work, especially with young people, low demandingness of managers;

b) the low technical level of production, the existence of a significant proportion of difficult manual labor, unsatisfactory production conditions;

c) shortcomings in the organization of production--the uneven operation of the sections, shops and the enterprise as a whole and the operations connected with this on days off, overtime, the unsatisfactory organization of the schedules of working time; shortcomings in the organization, rate setting, pay and stimulation of labor.

It is also possible to name a number of secondary causes--the unsatisfactory organization of the operation of passenger transport, the institutions of the service sphere.

Drunkenness, Alcoholism

It should be stated that these are the main causes of unauthorized leaves. As the results of the survey of a number of enterprises, where a record of the losses of working time and the violations of labor discipline on the grounds of drunkenness is kept, show, from 7 to 100 percent of the unauthorized leaves are taken for this reason. For example, at Electric Pipe Welding Shop No 1 of the Voroshilovgrad Pipe Plant imeni Yakubovskiy the unauthorized absences in connection with drunkenness and alcoholism amount to about 80 percent of the total number of absences from work. At the Cherkassy Azot Production Association they amount to 84.6 percent, at the Irkutsk Baykal Furniture Production Association--89.9 percent, at the Krasnoyarsk Electric Railroad Car Repair Plant--95 percent, at the Bezmein Cement Plant (the Turkmen SSR)--100 percent. As the results of studies show, the "peak" of unauthorized absences falls to the 4 to 5 days following the issuing of wages.

Unfortunately, substantial shortcomings exist in the organization of the campaign against drunkenness and alcoholism at enterprises.

In a large number of instances not only are the necessary demandingness, persistence, adherence to principle and consistency not being displayed on the part of the administration, public organizations and the labor collectives in the struggle against drunkenness, but, on the contrary, connivance is being allowed. Many instances are known, when work during another shift or on days off is permitted for drunkards and people suffering from alcoholism, who took unauthorized leaves. As a result there are repeated unauthorized leaves. It happens that people who abuse alcoholic beverages are enlisted in the performance of overtime, which leads to the appearance of wages, which are not taken into account in the family budget, and, thus, is conducive to private drinking bouts. For the practice of paying wages through savings banks has not been established at the majority of enterprises.

The stand and role of a certain portion of the managers of labor collectives are also conducive to the spread of all these negative phenomena. Some of them, while condemning this phenomenon in words, are not taking effective steps to put a stop

to drunkenness, and sometimes take an active part themselves in the organization of joint drinking bouts. As the results of a survey of workers of a number of industrial enterprises showed, approximately 37.5 percent of the brigade leaders and 13.4 percent of the foremen, including women, here regularly drink with the members of the production brigades. In particular, the conviction, which has formed among a certain portion of the managers, that the joint consumption of alcoholic beverages will improve without fail the relations among workers within their labor activity, operates here. In the opinion of 60 percent of the surveyed workers of the enterprises, alcoholic beverages are conducive to the establishment of business contacts.

At a number of enterprises either work on the identification of drunkards (people who contantly abuse alcohol, but without signs of suffering from alcoholism) is not being performed at all or it is being performed somehow timidly. The work on the identification and registration of people suffering from alcoholism, as well as on the assurance of their active treatment has also been unsatisfactorily organized at some enterprises.

Work is not being performed everywhere on the identification of the intraworks causes (technical and organizational, occupational, economic, psychological and so on) of the regular consumption of alcoholic beverages.

Meanwhile it has been revealed by the studies conducted by the Scientific Research Institute of Labor and other organizations that the greatest number of drunkards, alcoholics and, consequently, absentees is concentrated, as a rule, in those sections of production where unfavorable production working conditions exist. It is not ruled out that a kind of inverse relationship exists between unfavorable working conditions and cases of the abuse of alcoholic beverages.

Let us note that experience in the effective combatting of drunkenness has been gained at a number of enterprises, and it is necessary to carefully study and use it as extensively as possible. The plant council on the prevention and control of drunkenness, the drug addiction office, the committee of the primary organization of the Society of the Red Cross, the anti-alcohol club and other public organizations are working actively at the Vilnius Plant of Electrical Measuring Equipment. During the period of 1970-1980 the number of people abusing alcohol decreased at the plant by more than one-half. Moreover, here they do not dismiss drinkers but, on the contrary, hire such people, implementing an extensive and effective set of measures on their treatment and diversion from the bad habit.

It is recommended by the decree of the CPSU Central Committee, the USSR Council of Ministers and the AUCCTU "On the Further Tightening Up of Labor Discipline and the Decrease of the Turnover of Personnel in the National Economy" to use against violators measures of summary punishment, public and material pressure with allowance made for the decisions of the workers' meetings, the councils of production brigades and the councils of brigade leaders. The role of the collectives in the campaign for the tightening up of labor discipline is thereby increased.

However, in spite of the existence of an entire arsenal of diverse means of influence, the number of unauthorized leaves at many enterprises is still high.

Such a situation, it seems to us, stems from a number of circumstances.

First of all there is the conciliatory, liberal attitude toward the violators of labor discipline, which finds expression first of all in the fact that a portion of the cases of unauthorized leaves and appearance at work drunk is deliberately not taken into account, and, of course, no steps are taken on them. The practice, when information on previously taken unauthorized leaves, in accordance with which no steps of pressure against the violators were taken, is cited in the orders on the imposition of summary punishments for the more complete description of the violators of labor discipline, has become widespread.

Another circumstance is the fact that some economic managers do not use in their work all the legal means of influencing the violators of labor discipline, which are at their disposal, simply out of ignorance.

Here and there middle level specialists and workers have no idea about the possible consequences of unauthorized leave. The gaps in the legal education of workers and employees show here.

The Connection of Unauthorized Leaves With Working Conditions

The number of unauthorized leaves is considerably greater at enterprises where the scale of the use of difficult manual labor is relatively greater. The workers employed in such sections of production, as a rule, have a low level of education and skills, a brief length of service at the enterprise, a lower level of labor and creative activeness. Thus, in the transportation shop of the Moscow Krasnyy bogatyr' Plant, of which the existence of a signficiant number of workplaces with the use of difficult and unappealing manual labor is characteristic, more than 75 percent of the workers have an education up to the eighth grade, more than half have been working at the enterprise less than 2 years. In the shop approximately one-third of the staff of workers is replaced annually. In the total amount of the turnover of personnel for the shop the people dismissed for unauthorized leaves, as well as other violations of labor discipline make up more than 60 percent (!). At the same time in connection with the difficulties in manning the shop with a regular labor force people dismissed for unauthorized leave from other enterprises, and at times from this enterprise, make up more than half of the workers annually hired here. However, since the unattractive working conditions remain, the causes predisposing to violations of labor discipline also remain. As a result, during the first year of work at the new place a significant portion of the workers, who were newly hired from among those dismissed for unauthorized leave, commit repeated violations of labor discipline. As a result, here the losses of working time due to unauthorized leaves (per worker) exceed by more than fivefold the corresponding indicator for the plant as a whole. And although the number of workers of the transportation shop comes to less than 1 percent of all the personnel, this shop accounts for a third of all the plant losses of working time due to unauthorized leaves.

It is obvious that only the elaboration and implementation here of a comprehensive goal program of the reduction of the use of manual labor will really help to eradicate unauthorized leaves.

The Erraticness of Production

The unauthorized leaves being taken are intrinsically connected with the erratic operation of individual enterprises, shops and sections. This gives rise to the systematic enlistment of workers in work on days off and in overtime during the second half of the month. Such a practice leads to the relaxation of labor discipline in the collective, especially during the first half of the month, which finds expression both in the increase of the number of unauthorized leaves and in the incomplete utilization of working time, numerous instances of late arrivals at work and early departure from work. Another aspect of erraticness is the inevitable decrease of the demandingness on subordinates on the part of foremen and managers of sections and shops, who systematically enlist people in work on days off and in overtime. For they lose, in essence, the moral right to use measures of summary punishment and public pressure against subordinates who have taken unauthorized leaves: a week and a half or two will pass, and the same foreman will have to ask the people to work on days off or overtime. In practice under such conditions the unauthorized leaves often are simply not recorded. Either the absences from work after they have occurred are registered as leave with the permission of the administration or the absentees are given an opportunity to work on days off.

However, conditions conducive to the taking of unauthorized leaves are also created at times under the conditions of relatively great smoothness. The practice of working two or three days off or holidays a month has become widespread in some sectors of industry. Absence from work on these days is considered an unauthorized leave. A direct dependence is traced between the increase of the number of unauthorized leaves in the case of an increase of the number of worked days off and holidays. Thus, at the Voroshilovgradskaya No 1 Mine the number of man-days, which were worked by workers on holidays and days off, in 1980 had increased as compared with 1976 by 13.1 percent, while the number of unauthorized leaves increased during this period by 10.4 percent.

In the case of the permanent performance of overtime work at times even conscientious, disciplined workers take unauthorized leaves, the level of discipline declines even in healthy labor collectives. For example, in August 1981 at the Mine imeni XIX s"yezda KPSS of the Voroshilovgradugol' Production Association one of the drilling brigades worked 6 percent more man-days of overtime and on days off than provided for by legislation. During the same month 9.6 percent of the workers took unauthorized leaves. The workers of the brigade believed that since they had worked on days off (according to the schedule) at the request of the chief of the section, they could arbitrarily not come to work on any day.

The results of a survey of the workers of the brigade, first of all of the young people and those who have dachas and private plots, showed that work on days off does not suit them.

What Is to Be Done?

Wherever much attention is devoted to the combatting of unauthorized leaves, along with the skillful flexible use of the entire set of means stipulated by legislation, additional strict measures with respect to absentees have been elaborated and are being implemented. The experience of these enterprises merits study.

For example, at the Dnepropetrovsk Metallurgical Equipment Plant the following measures, in particular, are being used in conformity with the local enforceable enactments in effect here.

Special boards, on which the photographs of deliberate absentees, drunkards and other disorganizers of production with the appropriate text are placed, have been introduced in all the shops.

The most deliberate absentees of production, who yield with difficulty to reform, on the decision of the trade union organizations, the Comrade Courts and other public organizations are issued for a period of up to 3 months permits of a special format.

Loans for individual housing construction are not issued and construction materials are not released to people, who have taken an unauthorized leave or have appeared at work drunk, other benefits are also not in effect with respect to them for 6 months following the violation.

Material assistance from the fund of the enterprise and the trade union budget is not given to these people for a year from the day of the taking of an unauthorized leave or appearance at work drunk.

The workers and employees, who have committed a violation of labor discipline and public order more than once in a year, are not transferred to higher paying skilled jobs, their wage categories are not increased.

It Is Controversial, and Yet....

The system of collective moral and material responsibility for the state of labor discipline and public order, which was elaborated for the first time at the Severka Pipe Plant of Sverdlovskaya Oblast, is being used at a number of enterprises of the country as an effective, although for the present an experimental method of educational influence. At its basis is socialist competition under the motto "Collective Responsibility for Discipline!"

Approximately the following is stipulated in the statute on collective moral and material responsibility, which is confirmed by a joint decisions of the administration and the plant committee of the trade union.

For the competing collectives, in which during the year not one unauthorized leave was taken or not one violation of public order was committed, the award in accordance with the results of work for the year is increased by 10 percent.

The competing collectives, in which during the month if only one case of unauthorized leave or violation of public order will be committed, are deprived of the bonus for the given month from the material incentive fund.

The collectives, in which a recurrence of unauthorized leave or the violation of public order will be committed, are deprived of the annual award for the month in which it occurred.

The annual socialist obligations on collective moral and material responsibility are considered adopted only in the case of the voluntary consent of all the collective members without exception, and each member signs them personnally.

The first 6 months of work of newly hired workers are considered a period of familiarization. The collectives, which have assumed the obligation on moral and material responsibility for the state of labor discipline and public order, during this period do not bear responsibility for the taking of unauthorized leave by the newly hired workers or their committing of a violation of public order.

At a number of enterprises it is stipulated that if there are no repeated unauthorized leaves in the collective, the bonus, which the workers were deprived of at one time, at the end of the year is paid to all the workers.

The realization of collective moral and material responsibility for the state of labor discipline, in our opinion, ensues from the collective nature of socialist labor and is a method of influence, on the basis of which the rule: all for one and one for all, is in practice introduced in the everyday usage of the masses.

The effectiveness of the method as a whole is confirmed by the analysis of the results of its use. Thus, in the collective of the open-hearth shop of the Severka Pipe Plant during the first 7 years the number of unauthorized leaves decreased to one-twelfth, while for the plant as a whole the number of unauthorized leaved was reduced to one-third. The following fact is also interesting. The members of the brigades, which had assumed the obligation in collective responsibility, lost in a year per person a bonus of 5 rubles. However, due to the decrease of the number of unauthorized leaves the shop provided an additional 710 tons of steel, which enabled the members of the brigades to receive an appreciable wage increment.

Now in Sverdlovskaya Oblast more than 11,000 labor collectives, in which more than 190,000 workers are united, have adopted and are carrying out obligations on collective responsibility; in Dnepropetrovskaya Oblast more than 9,000 labor collectives (230,000 workers) are using the method.

It must be noted that, like any new initiative, the system of collective moral and material responsibility for the state of labor discipline and public order has not only supporters.

A careful unhurried check of the system of collective responsibility will show its strong and weak points, the degree of actual effectiveness under present conditions and, perhaps, will suggest what corrections should be made both in this system and in the prevailing labor legislation.

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Measures of Control

Moscow KHOZYAYSTVO I PRAVO in Russian No 1, Jan 82 pp 36-38

[Article by A. Chevtayev, director of the Noginsk Fuel Equipment Plant imeni 50-letiya Oktyabrya: "From Analysis to a System"]

[Text] There was a time when such a violation as unauthorized leave was considered an extraordinary event, while the turnover of personnel was expressed in fractions of a percent. Now at our plant the turnover of personnel is 12.6 percent, which is nevertheless half as great as the average for the Ministry of Tractor and Agricultural Machine Building. And not one planning session, not one conference manages without a discussion of labor discipline.

In order to treat any disease, it is necessary first to make a diagnosis, more simply speaking, in this case to identify the causes of absences from work and unauthorized leaves, which provide a significant proportion of the losses of working time. In 10 months of 1981 alone our collective lost 1,431 workdays. True, this is 150 days less than during the same period of 1980, but still these losses justly worry us. The analysis shows that the unauthorized absences, which last from 2 weeks to several months, have become more frequent in recent years.

There are two trends here. The first: a quite good worker suddenly does not return from vacation and shows up at the plant in about 3 months. It turns out that he "joined" an amateur construction brigade, as they say here, of knockers off and built along with them either a pig sty or a stockyard at a remote kolkhoz. Let us face it, in practice we do not dismiss such people: for the plant is provided with manpower at a level of only 96.6 percent.

The second source of "lengthy" unauthorized leaves is young people. A fellow graduates from a vocational and technical school, comes to the shop, but he does not like the job. You notice that he is not there a day, 2 days, a week. Then he appears and says that his parents "felt sorry" for him and they give him time to do nothing until he is drafted into the army. Although there are few of this kind, they increase quite sharply the number of lost workdays. The unauthorized absences connected with appearance at work drunk and the notifications from the medical treatment center for alcoholics also worry us.

We considered 2 years ago the creation at the plant of a drug addiction dispensary. Before this we conducted a survey among the chiefs of shops and services, a kind of "referendum." There was one question and the responses "yes" and "no" were anticipated. But many made in the margin eloquent additions of approximately the following content: "There are not enough workers, and these are not workers," "If we set up a dispensary, we will assemble the drunkards from the entire city." The majority supported the creation not of a dispensary, but of a drug addiction office. That is what we did.

The commission for the combatting of drunkenness, which is headed by the deputy director for personnel and consumer service, reviews all unauthorized leaves. The collective in which the violator works determines the severity of the offense in conformity with the legislation, and its opinion is taken into account without fail when determining the degree of punishment. In a year 95 reprimands and 168 strict

reprimands were given. At the sittings of the Comrade Courts 45 cases were tried. A person who has taken unauthorized leave is deprived without fail of the monthly bonus and often of the 13th wage. Moreover, we postpone the vacation to "inconvenient" months.

The situation is more complex with those who have repeatedly ended up at a medical treatment center for alcoholics and continue to drink. In the end we dismiss such people. He will be without a job for several months, then comes to the personnel division. The division chief knows them by name and refuses to hire them, but, you see, in a week he comes with an order of the job placement bureau. Try to refuse. But there is a place for him at the treatment and work dispensary. But how do you send him there? In 3 years we have not received a single place. And the medical commission looks at the health of alcoholics as if it is picking them not for a treatment and work dispensary, but for the detachment of cosmonauts. If the blood pressure is elevated a little (and for whom of them is it normal?), they do not take them. It seems that this procedure must be considerably simplified.

Such a measure as the postponement of the turn for housing is stipulated in the collective contract with respect to offenders. But it is ineffective. In 7 years we have built only one 119-apartment building, while we are building the second with our own resources, and it is difficult to say when we will complete it. The fact that annually a third of those who have left the plant are dismissed for this reason, testifies to the urgency of the housing problem. I believe that not only our plant needs assistance in solving this problem.

The combatting of violations of labor discipline, and first of all unauthorized leaves, is effective only when it is based on the interest of all the links. Previously, for example, here the engineering and technical personnel were responsible only morally for discipline in the shops. They were reproached at conferences, meetings and planning sessions. Now "the coefficient of the stabilization of the collective and the decrease of violations of labor discipline" has been introduced for the payment of bonuses to the engineering and technical personnel of the shops. An estimated coefficient is specified for the shops in accordance with the results of the past year. Each quarter the actual coefficient is derived, and if it is greater than the estimated coefficient, the amount of the bonus of the engineering and technical personnel is decreased.

Monetary bonuses are also established for the best collectives. The winner should fulfill the quarterly plan of organizational and educational work and should decrease the turnover of personnel by not less than 15 percent as compared with the same period of the year before. In all the quarters, except the first, the turnover of personnel and the state of labor discipline are taken into account by a cumulative total.

It is simply impossible to increase the level of labor discipline without a developed system of registration and monitoring. Hence, it is necessary to know precisely who did not come to work, who was late and why.

By an order for the plant in 1980 the number of people having during working time the right to freely leave the plant grounds was decreased sharply, the conducting of meetings, seminars and other measures during working time was also prohibited. It must be said that we placed great hopes in the automated system of timekeeping

on the basis of the Kolkhida electronic entrance gate. A pass with perforations is inserted in the slot of a turnstile of this type, as in the subway, and their number and arrangement are not repeated. And the computer immediately records on the totals printout who has passed through the entrance gate. It is a pity that the system turned out to be imperfect and often confuses the person who has passed through the entrance gate with another worker. It was necessary to return to the receiving and issuing of passes by the timekeepers of the shops. We hope that in the near future turnstiles activated by magnetic passes will appear.

The processing of the timekeeping data is carried out daily, and on the next day the chief of the personnel division reports the results at the planning session. The information on the violators of labor discipline is broken down into 10-day, monthly, quarterly and annual information. This makes it possible to make an analysis, to determine and eliminate the causes of the violations. Such a system makes it possible to review in good time and on a high level the cases of offenders in the Comrade Courts and at workers' meetings and enables public organizations to work purposefully. In literally a few days the offenders also ends up in the section "Grinding" of our plant newspaper.

The workers of the legal division of the plant, the people's judges who speak here and the staff members of the militia and prosecutor's office organize legal propaganda on the basis of specific examples. In my opinion, the legal training of engineering and technical personnel, especially the managers of subdivisions, should not be limited to occasional lectures and discussions (even if they are planned). Practical experience shows that ignorance of legal norms leads to errors, especially in the case of dismissal, while it is difficult to imagine how the authority of a manager decreases after the reinstatement of an absentee by the court. Questions of law should be included in the plan of sectorial courses of the improvement of skills and various seminars.

Practically everyone is worried by the state of labor discipline, especially the large number of unauthorized leaves. Sociological studies are being conducted, applied science conferences are being held, a difference of opinions is being heard in the plant shops. And not last among them is: "be stricter, take additional steps, dismiss."

One director I know said with permitting objections: "It is necessary for deliberate absentees by verdict of the court to work at their workplaces several months without the crediting of bonuses and other increments."

The step seemed too "extreme" to me, and I objected to it.

"But if a person takes unauthorized leave after unauthorized leave, disrupts the work, and puts the entire shop in a fever, is this not 'extreme' laxity, is this not 'extreme' irresponsibility?" my interlocutor got worked up.

For a long time afterwards I pondered these words. Indeed, what is one to do if they deprive you of the bonus and the 13th wage as well, postpone vacation? One has only to be dismissed. But tomorrow he will be working at another enterprise, in an unfamiliar collective, which should begin everything anew. But is it not better to leave such a person in the old place and punish him by the ruble? This step should be truly "extreme" and should not be used without the proper arguments of the intercession of the collective, first of all the brigade.

We are now thinking more and more often about extending the rights of the basic collectives. There already exists the practice, when the brigade, which works without violations of labor discipline, receives for this additional payments to the bonus, can apply to the administration for its increase for individual workers and can use the coefficient of labor participation. It seems that the brigade should have the opportunity not only to stimulate the outstanding worker, but also to call the negligent worker to account.

When speaking about the regulation of labor discipline, we most often turn to measures of punishment, at times forgetting the positive arsenal of means. Take the same 13th wage. For it is often perceived not as a reward for labor, but truly as an additional wage. In my opinion, in the GDR it is designated more accurately: "for dedication to the enterprise." Here it is necessary to present it solemnly, spelling out for what it is being given to a person. And it should be connected not only and not so much with the length of service as with the real contribution, with the attitude of the worker toward the matter.

We also stint at times on messages of appreciation. In the army a good soldier in 2 years has not less than 10 of them, while a worker with 10 years of service at times does not have two. So it turns out that the distance between a slacker and an outstanding work is not of such "an enormous size" as it should be.

When speaking about the difficulties in the campaign for the tightening up of labor discipline, the shortage of manpower, which at times forces managers to refrain from such steps as the withholding of bonuses and dismissal, is usually named as the first negative factor. But this shortage is not the cause, but the consequence. At times the enterprises themselves create it, by overstating the planned number of workers, which in accordance with the total of the plans of enterprises during the last five-year plan exceeded the actual availability of manpower resources by nearly 2.5 million people.

It is no secret that people are diverted "for potatoes," the construction of apartment houses with the plant's own resources, the building of urban projects--and at the same time the plants fulfill and exceed the plans.

It is time to determine precisely at the local level the causes of the losses of working time and, on the basis of this, to elaborate a well-balanced system of measures of a social, economic and legal order, which is aimed at the radical improvement of labor discipline. But here one cannot manage with the forces of the services of enterprises. Recommendations, which make it possible to do this on a scientific basis, are needed.

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PROBLEM OF WORK FORCE IN NONCHERNOZEM AREAS NOTED

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[Article by I.Orlova, junior research associate, Sector for the Social Development of the Countryside, Institute of Sociological Research, USSR Academy of Sciences]

[Text] The 26th CPSU Congress noted that the lessening availability of labor resources is one of the factors that will complicate the economic development of the country in the 1980's. Accordingly, the congress emphasized that an economical attitude toward labor resources acquires special significance. This is a difficult task requiring the solution of many problems of an economic, social and educational nature.

Many manpower problems arise in nonchernozem areas which are beset by the decline in the natural growth of manpower and high rates of out-migration of the rural population.

The reduction of the size of the population between the ages of 16 and 29 years is particularly intensive. And yet it is specifically the youth who play the major part in agro-industrial integration, who in the next 10-15 years will have the decisive role in developing production in the countryside. But I would like to make several comments on this problem.

Sociological studies show that the supply of agricultural production with personnel depends primarily on the level of economic development of a concrete farm and the degree of satisfaction of the various needs of people on the farm. Economically strong kolkhozes and sovkhozes lose significantly fewer people and attract more resettlers than average or weak farms. However this is only the most general picture of the process. The differing volume of migration from farms that enjoy roughly the same level of economic development suggests that a careful study should be made of the causes of turnover in various socio-demographic and occupational-skill groups and that factors that would promote their stabilization be ascertained.

Studies show that the primary reason why ...ple migrate from rural areas is that the requirements of rural dwell... are not satisfied to a sufficient degree. Consequently, in order to ...p cadres in the major agricultural occupations, it is essential to adopt measures that will raise

the rural living standard, improve working conditions, expand the sphere of application of labor, make more rational use of working and leisure time, improve housing conditions and personal services, and improve the state of cultural and educational work and health care. Of course, much has been and is being done in this direction. The point at issue must not merely be the strengthening of these measures but also the determination of their correlation and their sequence.

In the 1950's, the main reason that young people left the countryside was to obtain a higher paying job. The material stimulus was primary. Changes in the remuneration of agricultural labor after the September (1953) Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee slightly reduced the importance of wages as a factor in youth migration from the countryside. But the situation is once more undergoing radical change. The material factor ceases to be dominant in the migration of rural youth. In recent years, it has given way to interest in skilled labor, the striving to acquire a specialty or to continue education, and the orientation to change one's social status.

According to a sociological study conducted on kolkhozes and sovkhozes in the Nonchernozem Zone, the following are the basic factors prompting people to leave agricultural production.

Dissatisfaction with the organization of labor and working conditions was the most important factor both among young workers as well as among all surveyed groups of working people. Poor working conditions, the lack of a five-day work week the long working day, and absence of regularly scheduled days off are a source of dissatisfaction to most agricultural workers and prompt them to leave the branch. In the evaluation of the reasons for leaving, certain points are specific to youth. In the hierarchy of reasons, youth assigned third and fourth place to deficiencies in the work of rural cultural institutions and the lack of people their own age.

In order to refine the research findings, managerial personnel on kolkhozes and sovhkozes filled out a separate questionnaire in which they were asked to state their judgment regarding the basic reasons why various workers quit their jobs at agricultural enterprises. Interestingly, the reasons cited by the farms' managers differed significantly from the reasons given by the workers themselves. Most of the managers saw the basic reason to lie in the workers' dissatisfaction with housing conditions while only 1/ percent of the migrants cited housing as a factor influencing their decision. Farm managers cited the low level of amenities in housing in second place. In their opinion, production conditions, and the work and rest routines merely occupied third and fourth place in the hierarchy of motives.

The substantial disparity in the evaluation of the causes of turnover by management and by the migrants themselves shows that the "competent persons," as they are called in our questionnaire, do not always have precise knowledge of these reasons and are not always able to make an objective evaluation of the actual situation on a given farm.

Thus, in the opinion of the migrants themselves, the main reason for leaving was their dissatisfaction with production conditions and the lack of a normed working day (62 percent of the total number polled and 61 percent of the youth) and the desire for high earnings (53 and 55 percent, respectively). The youngest segment of youth (16-19 years) cited the desire to acquire an occupation and to have an interesting job in first place. This is entirely understandable since it is specifically at this age that youth try to find their niche in life.

Are they successful in realizing their plans at their new workplace? In the opinion of the young people themselves, tney are usually successful in doing so. The same 16-19 year group is especially enthuasistic in evaluating the new working, living and recreational conditions. Eighty-three percent of them now have the possibility for professional advancement and 75 percent of them believe that their work has become more interesting.

Subjective evaluations of working, living and recreational conditions at the new workplace compared with work in agriculture were monitored on the basis of actual data on wages, educational level, and changes in vocational training and housing conditions. Comparison of these data attests to the correctness of the subjective evaluations by youth. Thus, their wages increased from 106 rubles to 148 rubles and in the case of the 16-19 year group--from 90 to 144 rubles. Young people raised their educational level and vocational training level slightly. The housing conditions of young migrants worsened in the city. Thus, 57 percent of them lived in their own houses in the countryside, compared with 13 percent after their move to the city; 3 percent lived in dormitories in the countryside; in the city--39 percent. This loss was in part compensated by the existence of public amenities in urban housing.

The factors prompting youth to leave agricultural production were also differentiated by sex. A large percentage of the young women noted that their decision to leave agriculture was primarily motivated by the lack of people of their own age in the countryside and by the deficient work of cultural institutions. Young men also emphasized these factors but to a far smaller degree. The desire of young females for agemates is dictated not only by the need for sociability but also by the orientation toward the creation of a family--an ambition to which girls attach greater importance. Young females also make high demands on their work. Scientific-technical progress and the significantly higher educational level of girls evoke in them the striving to master complex, interesting specialties. Among those leaving agriculture, the group of young women was the best educated: 59 percent of the young women had secondary, secondary specialized and higher education. Only 38 percent of the young male migrants had the same educational level. This fact notwithstanding, the majority of the young females were employed in unskilled and semiskilled work in the fields and in animal husbandry on kolkhozes and sovkhozes, whereas only 12 percent of the male migrants were employed in subsidiary work. The sphere of employment of women in skilled jobs in agriculture remains quite limited as yet and this fact hat a substantial influence on the development of a negative attitude toward the work and the desire to change jobs. By taking jobs in town, young females hope first of all to find interesting work with a normed work day, a five-day week and high earnings.

Of the occupational groups that have also noted dissatisfaction with working conditions as the main reason for leaving agricultural production, let us discuss the machine operators. The average age of tractor operators quitting their jobs on kolkhozes and sovkhozes was 28 years. One-fourth of them were first class and second class specialists and 86 percent had incomplete and secondary specialized education. The average tractor driver had worked 5.5 years on a farm. All this indicates that the tractor drivers leaving the countryside are young, educated, experienced and skilled people and this cannot fail to have a negative impact on agricultural production.

The reasons underlying the migration and turnover of agricultural cadres are a subjective reflection of factors that prompt workers to change jobs and workplaces. Success in securing the stabilization of youth in agricultural production depends on the degree of influence on these factors and the ability to control them.

It can be said that the share of youth in the work force is high at agricultural enterprises that successfully implement measures to retain personnel. While youth comprise 23 percent of the personnel in the work force at all Nonchernozem agricultural enterprises on the average, there are significant fluctuations from one region and district to another: from 10 percent in the Lukoyanovskiy Rayon of Gorkiy Oblast to 41 percent in the Falenskiy Rayon of Kirov Oblast. Let us examine the action of certain stabilization factors on the basis of the example of two groups of Gorkiy Oblast rayons with a relatively high share of youth (Bogorodskiy Rayon--24.5 percent; Kstovskiy Rayon--25.8) and low share of youth (Lukoyanovskiy Rayon--10 percent; Pochinkovskiy--13.8 percent) in the work force.

First, a direct dependence is discovered between the share of young workers and the level of urbanization of rural population centers. In the Lukoyanovskiy and Pochinkovskiy rayons--typical remote agricultural rayons with a low level of urbanization--the relative number of youth among the work force of agricultural enterprises is two-fifths the level of the highly urbanized Bogorodskiy and Kstovskiy rayons. Most of the population in the latter live in urban-type settlements, is provided with a more complete social infrastructure. A large segment is provided with well-equipped apartments. Thus, in the given rayons, 28.3 and 26.2 percent of the population lives in communal buildings with all the comforts compared with 5.4 and 9.5 percent in the Lukoyanovskiy and Pochinkovskiy rayons. The deconcentration of the population in this group of rayons hinders the further specialization of agriculture, is one of the serious reasons for lag in the level of cultural and personal services, has a negative impact on the supply of manpower to farms, on manpower utilization and retention, and is ultimately one of the factors impeding the further development of kolkhozes and sovkhozes.

The first group of rayons is also characterized by the higher level of industrialization of agricultural production and by better material-technical supply. Thus the average annual activation of fixed capital in the Kstovskiy Rayon in the 10th Five-Year Plan was 2.5 fold higher per worker than in the Pochinkovskiy Rayon while nonproductive capital in the former was 3.2 times greater than in the latter.

The work and rest routines were also slightly more favorable at agricultural enterprises in the Bogorodskiy and Kstovskiy rayons. Thus in the Kstovskiy Rayon, unlike the Lukoyanovskiy Rayon, the five-day work week is bein actively introduced, and for youth the practice of having two days off is an important social factor that has a positive impact on their attitudes toward agricultural work. The situation is similary with regard to sanitary conditions and service facilities. In the Kstovskiy Rayon, the level of organization of personal services in production is four times higher than in the Lukoyanovskiy Rayon.

The question arises: what should be given top priority in the investment program? Should the bulk of the funds be invested in improving the productive sphere or in the construction of nonproductive facilities?

Our research findings indicate that primary attention should be concentrated on improving the organization of labor, working conditions and work routines on kolkhozes and sovkhozes. Most workers--youth as well as workers in the older age group--referred to these factors as the leading ones. As regards the nonproductive sphere, we estimate that the manpower situation is relatively favorably on farms on which the share of nonproductive capital comprises 35-40 percent of all capital that is put into operation. As yet there are few such farms in the Nonchernozem Zone. At the same time, one important particular should be noted: good housing and personal services attract the work force but a farm will be unsuccessful in keeping young workers if it does not create favorable production conditions. Consequently, the problem of attracting young people to agricultural production and the problem of keeping them in agricultural production are two different problems. It turns out that the development of the nonproductive sphere alone is not enough to keep youth on the farm. Thus on farms that have good housing and that devote paramount attention to the development of the cultural and service infrastructure, there is a rapid rise in the share of pensioners and the elderly who are attracted by the comforts and conveniences, while the general indicators of the movement of youth--departures, arrivals and turnover--are higher.

Therein lie the total complexity and manysidedness of the stabilization of the agricultural work force. Stabilization factors work effectively only when they are part of a complex, only when the level of economic development of an agricultural enterprise and the level of cultural development of the country are sufficiently high.

In the control of the stabilization process, a differentiated approach to various age and sex groups is also important. Thus, there must be uniform distribution of general education schools, vocational-technical training schools and technicums for the 16-19 year old group; young people must be provided with jobs that offer the possiblity of professional advancement and the opportunity to upgrade their skill levels; and there must be improvement in vocational guidance work in rural general education schools. For young people in the 20-29 year old group, it is essential first of all to establish and expand evening and correspondence schools, to build well-appointed housing, children's institutions, and cultural

facilities which are important not only from the standpoint of improving services for the rural population but also from the standpoint of providing it with employment and expanding employment opportunities especially for women.

The 26th Congress of the CPSU Central Committee [sic] noted: "we still have a good many backward farms and a good many villages that need to be rebuilt, renovated and provided with public services and amenities. Without this, we will be unable to create stable labor collectives or make effective use of the production potential now existing in the countryside in the interests of the successful fulfillment of the food program. In short, a great deal of effort, time and money are still required to improve cultural and living conditions in the countryside and to overcome the essential differences between town and country."

In a single article, it is impossible to examine the influence exerted by various groups of stabilization factors--economic, social, demographic, educational-organizational, socio-psychological, and others--on the retention of cadres in the countryside. It is to be hoped that discussion of this important topic will continue.

Having published I. Orlova's article, the editors invite scholars and practical workers--expecially kolkhoz chairmen, sovkhoz directors, and local party workers--to participate in the discussion of one of the most important social problems--the stabilization of youth in the rural Nonchernozem Zone.

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